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(Part A)

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, June 18, 2018

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayer

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

● (1105)

[English]

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE PROTECTION ACT

Mr. John Aldag (Cloverdale—Langley City, Lib.) moved that Bill S-210, an act to amend An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the Civil Marriage Act and the Criminal Code and to make consequential amendments to other acts, be read the third time and passed.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to speak to Bill S-210, an act to amend an Act to Amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the Civil Marriage Act and the Criminal Code and to make consequential amendments to other acts. The legislation seeks to modernize Canada's statutes and remove the short title "Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act" from the legislation.

Bill S-210 was introduced by Senator Mobina Jaffer in the Senate and has reached third reading here in the House of Commons. I am proud that the legislation passed unanimously, without amendment, at the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights. Language matters, and the fact that the bill has reached its final stage of the legislative process is a proud reflection of that.

The language we use in the laws we pass matters. It reflects the intentions and desired outcomes of our statutes, as well as the type of society we want to build. When phraseology like "barbaric cultural practices" is used in law-making, it becomes apparent that the intention is to divide and fearmonger. Let me be clear. The politics of fear and division have no place in Canada, and no place in Canada's statutes. That is why Bill S-210 is before us today.

Bill S-210 amends Bill S-7 from the previous Parliament by removing its short title. It does not in any way affect the measures put in place by the bill. While Bill S-7 was aimed at strengthening protections for women and girls, the reference to "barbaric cultural practices" in the title creates divisions, promotes harmful stereotypes, and fuels intolerance by targeting specific communities. It is being perceived as offensive by certain communities and stakeholder

groups that serve immigrants, as it targets a cultural group as whole, rather than the individuals who commit specific acts.

As Senator Jaffer put it at the justice committee:

I have objected to pairing the words "barbaric" and "cultural". That's not a Canadian value. When we put the two ideas together, we take responsibility for horrific actions away from the person who committed them. It's not a community that commits those acts; it's a person. Instead, we associate the crime with a culture and a community, and we imply that such horrible practices are part of a culture or a community.

Hate crimes against certain minority populations are on the rise in Canada. When we falsely equate barbaric practices with cultures, we open the door to racist and intolerant attitudes that often drown out constructive dialogue on promoting diversity and inclusion. By recognizing the impacts that our words have on the tone and tenor of public discourse, policy-making, and law-making, we can be more deliberate and thoughtful in the words we choose. We abandon the dog whistle politics of barbaric cultural practices and commit ourselves to advancing values beyond mere tolerance, acceptance, and inclusion.

The Prime Minister captured the importance of these values and those of diversity in his address to New York University. He said:

Whether it's race, gender, language, sexual orientation, or religious or ethnic origin, or our beliefs and values themselves, diversity doesn't have to be a weakness. It can be our greatest strength.

Now often people talk about striving for tolerance. Now don't get me wrong. There are places in this world where a little more tolerance would go a long way. But if we're being honest, right here, right now, I think we can aim a little higher than mere tolerance. Think about it. Saying, "I tolerate you" actually means something like, "okay, I grudgingly admit that you have a right to exist, just don't get in my face about it..."

There is not a religion in the world that asks you to "tolerate thy neighbour". So let's try for something a little more like acceptance, respect, friendship, and yes, even love.

And why does this matter? Because in our aspiration to relevance, in our love for our families, in our desire to contribute to make this world a better place, despite our differences, we are all the same.

Words are important, and so are the values we put forward. Equally important, if not more so, are the actions we take in defence of those values. That is why our government has taken meaningful action to further embrace multiculturalism and promote diversity.

We have a Prime Minister who proudly represents Canada on the world stage as an open and welcoming nation. Indeed, Canada is a nation built in no small part through the contributions of immigrants.

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Our government understands this. That is why we promote safe and accessible immigration. We have prioritized family reunification by bringing families together more quickly. We doubled the number of parent and grandparent sponsorship applications accepted per year, from 5,000 to 10,000. We know that when families are reunited and offered the opportunity to succeed, all of Canada succeeds.

Our government is committed to an immigration system that strengthens Canada's middle class, helps grow our economy, supports diversity, brings families together, and helps build vibrant, dynamic, and inclusive communities.

The story of Canadian immigration is inseparable from the story of Canada itself, as we are committed to aiding and accepting people from all cultural backgrounds. Success stories abound when newcomers are offered the opportunity to succeed.

Let us take Peace by Chocolate as an example. The company, based in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, was founded by the Hadhad family. The Hadhads ran a successful chocolate factory in Syria, but they were forced to flee the civil war violence. After three years in a Lebanese refugee camp, they were offered the chance to immigrate to Canada. They started Peace by Chocolate, working to rebuild the business they had lost in war-torn Syria. Their story of success is a proud example of the opportunity that Canada offers to those who immigrate here, regardless of nationality.

The policies we are putting in place will allow more immigrants to find a home in Canada, contributing to our growing economy. These newcomers will drive innovation and help employers meet labour market needs. Supporting companies that bring high-skilled workers improves business opportunities for all Canadians. These are just a few examples of measures that our government has taken to further promote multiculturalism and ensure that our immigration system is efficient and accessible.

Our actions to promote diversity do not stop there. The Minister of Canadian Heritage recently unveiled the new federal action plan for official languages. This plan will invest nearly \$500 million over five years and focus on strengthening our communities, strengthening access to service, and promoting a bilingual Canada.

Through targets that aim to restore and maintain the proportion of francophones living in linguistic minority communities at 4% of the general population by 2036, provinces such as British Columbia will receive the support they need to continue promoting our linguistic diversity and bilingualism.

In support of multiculturalism, we are investing \$23 million over two years through budget 2018 in the federal multiculturalism program. Budget 2018 states:

This funding would support cross-country consultations on a new national anti-racism approach, would bring together experts, community organizations, citizens and interfaith leaders to find new ways to collaborate and combat discrimination, and would dedicate increased funds to address racism and discrimination targeted against Indigenous Peoples and women and girls.

In our pursuit of a more caring and inclusive country, we must also commit to doing better in the journey of reconciliation. As a multicultural country, Canada grapples not only with the intersections of a broad range of newcomer cultures, but with multiple generations of Canadians and indigenous peoples. Reconciliation must be part of the conversation as we discuss diversity and

inclusion in a 21st century Canada. Recognizing and making reparations for the historical abuse and mistreatment of indigenous peoples is a fundamental part of building a more inclusive society and promoting the diversity of Canada.

As members in this place, we have the privilege of introducing bills or motions that will affect and hopefully benefit our constituents, and all Canadians. I have had the privilege of sponsoring two private member's bills: Bill S-210, which is before us here today, and Bill C-374, which is now before the Senate.

If passed by the Senate, Bill C-374 would seek to advance reconciliation by adding much-needed indigenous representation to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, implementing call to action 79(i) of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action. The legislation would provide first nations, Métis, and Inuit representation on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. Without indigenous representation, the board conducts its affairs without a fulsome understanding of Canadian heritage and history. The inclusion of indigenous perspectives on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada would allow us to more fully commemorate Canada's historical peoples, places, and events, and offer a more authentic perspective on our heritage.

Canada is a pluralistic society, and our approach to fostering a more inclusive society is multi-faceted. It requires diligence and thoughtfulness on the part of legislators. By advancing legislation such as Bill S-210, we commit to recognizing the implications of the words we use, with the understanding that action is equally important. Abandoning terms such as "barbaric cultural practices" is an important step in modernizing our statutes and reflecting back on the type of society we want to build as Canadians.

I would like to thank my colleagues for their participation in this debate today. I am hopeful that members will join me today in supporting Bill S-210.

• (1110)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I was a member of the opposition when we had this debate about the short title and just how important it is. My colleague and friend made reference to Canada's diversity. It is often referred to by our Prime Minister as one of Canada's greatest strengths, as is the importance of multiculturalism to us as a society. I wonder if my friend could provide his personal thoughts with respect to Canada being a multicultural country and how we have benefited from that both economically and socially. Ultimately, I would suggest that we are envied by countries around the world because of our great diversity. I wonder if my colleague might want to add some thoughts to that, and why he felt so compelled with respect to this legislation.

Mr. John Aldag: Madam Speaker, last weekend, when I was in my riding, Cloverdale—Langley City, I had the honour, in one single day, of having a taste of the diversity represented in our community. I was able to go to a South Asian wedding at one of the gurdwaras in my riding, and from there I went to Ramadan prayers with the Muslim community. That afternoon, I joined the Buddhist community for a graduation ceremony and handed out certificates at the ceremony. To me that represents, in one single day, the diversity that we have in Canada, and how that is the strength of our community and our country.

As the Prime Minister has said, it is important to celebrate the diversity in our society, because it really is Canada's strength. It helps us with world trade, and it is a way of showing that faiths and communities from around the world can live together in one country, the one we proudly call Canada. That is why Bill S-210 is so important. We need to show that anyone is welcome in Canada and that we can make a proud and strong country.

• (1115)

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to applaud the member for adding indigenous representation to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, and I would ask him to talk more about the importance of that to Canada's history. There is only one group of people who have been here for millennia, so I think it is a tremendous initiative.

Mr. John Aldag: Madam Speaker, the member is referring to Bill C-374, which is before the Senate right now. It is a very important bill, again going along with the theme of diversity being our strength. That particular bill references the need to have indigenous representation on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. The Senate is currently debating the bill.

Today, we are having a debate on Bill S-210, which is another step we can take to show that Canada actually values diversity. It is an important opportunity for us to weigh in on the discussion about what kind of culture and community we want to build.

As my colleague from the New Democrats pointed out, words are so important, and Bill S-210 really challenges us as legislators to get the wording right to build an inclusive and supportive Canada. That is why I am very proud to be sponsoring Bill S-210 in the House of Commons today.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, after a nice quiet weekend in my riding, I want to take this opportunity to thank all the pages and all of the parliamentary precinct security folks who looked after us during our all-night voting on Thursday night.

I also want to say a special thanks to my riding staff, because I miss them, Lauren Semple, Hilary Eastmure, and Michael Snoddon, and all the people at home who have been holding down the fort while we have been here since the end of January.

I am really grateful to everybody who is keeping the community work going, NGOs, local governments, everybody who is working hard to support the work we are doing here in Parliament.

We really hope that this is our last week, and I cannot wait to be home. Because we are close to the end, I have to say I am a little impatient about giving this speech. Bill S-210 proposes to amend the

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title of a Harper-era piece of legislation, the Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act.

It seems like a long time ago when that piece of legislation was passed. It was passed in what I would call a dark decade of parliamentary rule. The unveiling of that quite racist legislation was one of the low points in the Harper era. It was dog-whistle politics at its worst. It was racist and inflammatory. Ministers stood and said we need to eradicate barbaric cultural practices, when all they needed to say was that we are going to rule against female genital mutilation. We are all for that, but it does not need to be put in the frame of alienating anybody who is not white and born and raised in Canada. Canada is a diverse country. We all practice our culture in different ways. There are acts that should be criminalized, especially acts that are damaging to young girls.

The Conservatives campaigned on that Harper-framed legislation, and I like to think that was part of their downfall, because the citizens of this country said no to it.

I also want to give special thanks to *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, which acted like a second official opposition alongside New Democrats in the previous Parliament. I still chuckle about the show's parody on the barbaric cultural practices act. It named things like wearing socks with sandals as a cultural barbaric practice, and kissing the cod in the wrong way. They had fun with it, but it was not funny.

Given all the damage that was done in 10 years of Conservative rule, the Liberal government received a strong mandate from the Canadian public.

However, here we are today with legislation before us which would simply amend the title of the legislation. It would do nothing else. I am going to vote in favour of Bill S-210, because who would not vote in favour of it? Language matters, but actions also matters. There is so much work to do. Here we are, two and a half years into this term, and we still are not getting it done.

Some time this week, we will be tabling a report on what the Liberal government could do to end the atrocious rate of incarceration of indigenous women in Canadian jails and how badly they are treated. The report also talks about the barriers they face in the justice system that results in them being imprisoned at a higher rate.

Another Conservative law repealed the mandatory minimum sentencing. It removed judicial discretion. The Liberal Party campaigned in 2015 that it would repeal mandatory minimum sentencing, but it has not done it.

Government Orders

Of all the things that would make a difference in people's lives, I wish that this legislation had more oomph behind it. Of course, language matters, but attendant action is so important. Voting yes to the bill, which I will be doing, will not change anyone's life. There is still a lot of legislative damage that has yet to be undone, and I do not believe that Bill S-210 would have been at the top of anybody's list.

I also have a bit of a bad attitude about this because of my private member's bill on abandoned vessels, Bill C-352. I worked on my bill with local government partners for about eight years before coming to this place. I tabled it in February 2016, and I updated it in April 2017.

• (1120)

Three days after it went on the Order Paper in October of this year, the government introduced its own bill, which I had wanted to see. I had hoped the government would have plagiarized and incorporated my private member's bill into it. However, then it used a couple of almost never used parliamentary manoeuvres to prevent my bill from being heard or voted on at all.

Obviously, it was a great disappointment. It was a piece of legislation, whether one agreed with it or not, that had some substance and some heft. It would have made a difference on the ground. It would have changed legislation that would have prevented oil spills and marine plastics and pollution on our beaches in the form of fibreglass boats. That is a long-standing problem that local governments have been calling the alarm on. However, that was killed, and here we are taking the time to debate legislation that is only going to amend a legislative title.

I urge all my colleagues to hunker down and get the real work done that would actually change lives on the ground. We have tremendous privilege being in this place. We have tremendous power. We have a huge mandate, and we have a lot of work to do. Let us do the hard work that really matters and get on with the work that Canadians sent us to do here in this place.

Mr. John Aldag (Cloverdale—Langley City, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it has truly been a privilege to bring forward Bill S-210, An Act to amend An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the Civil Marriage Act and the Criminal Code and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

I would like to first thank my colleagues for their support in this legislation, and contributions in debate. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank Senator Mobina Jaffer for introducing this legislation in the Senate, and for her work in advancing this bill.

As I mentioned in my opening remarks, I have had the unique opportunity to bring forward two pieces of legislation. I took great care in considering what issues I wanted to advance, and I am proud to have supported Bill S-210.

I would also like to take a moment to provide comments to my colleague from the New Democratic Party for the thoughts she just offered. First of all, I would like to thank her for the pledge to support this legislation today. However, I also believe that this bill actually does have the impacts we are seeking in society. She said it does nothing for Canadians, yet I believe that reflecting inclusive

language in legislation is the most important thing we as legislators can do.

As was noted, we have a remnant of the Harper Conservatives on the books that was very inflammatory, very divisive, and it used the lowest grade of politics in trying to divide Canadians. This would remove that. I think that is a great use of legislative time. I am proud to have dedicated my efforts in sponsoring Bill S-210 in the House of Commons to further this discussion.

Bill S-210 is a reflection on the importance of the language we use in crafting and drafting our legislation, and the ways in which we wish to shape our society. As our Prime Minister likes to say, "Canada is strong not in spite of our differences, but because of them."

Through this legislation, we have the opportunity to reject phraseology, and the unnecessary and inappropriate conflation of culture with barbaric practices. Through this legislation, we have the opportunity to reject the politics of fear and division in favour of diversity and inclusion. I am hopeful that all members will join me in supporting Bill S-210 and advancing these important efforts.

• (1125)

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed)

[English]

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The House is now suspended until 12:00 p.m.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 11:27 a.m.)

SITTING RESUMED

(The House resumed at 12 p.m.)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1200)

[Translation]

CANNABIS ACT

The House resumed from June 13 consideration of the motion in relation to the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-45, An Act respecting cannabis and to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Criminal Code and other Acts.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Madam Speaker, I should mention that I will be sharing my time with the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster.

I rise once again to speak to Bill C-45 on the legalization of marijuana, on behalf of the millions of Canadians who would like to be standing beside me or in my place.

Government Orders

Let us not forget that the Prime Minister promised that legalizing marijuana would take street drugs out of the hands of children and take the production and sale of drugs away from organized crime. That is the line the government adopted to support this bill, but we can clearly see that it is completely false.

Last fall, we voted under the guillotine of time allocation, and naturally, given the Liberal majority, the bill was passed and sent to the Senate.

I am pleased to see that the senators felt free to propose the 46 amendments we are studying today. Interestingly enough, 29 of these 46 amendments are from the government. We have said all along that Bill C-45 is a botch job, that it would not work, and that we could not support it. Today we have proof, because the government itself had to make 29 amendments to a bill it rushed to ram down the throats of the members of the House of Commons.

Now the Senate, comprised mostly of government-appointed independent Liberals, agrees with the opposition and made a total of 46 amendments. Clearly, Bill C-45 was botched from the beginning, and we still do not understand the logic.

The Prime Minister appears to be living in a fantasy world. We often hear people talking about a magical land of unicorns and Care Bears. I think those people have a point, considering what is going on and how the Prime Minister sees and does things. It really is a fantasy land, and nothing we are being told makes any sense.

The government's official position was that Bill C45 was supposed to resolve the problem of marijuana trafficking controlled by organized crime and keep marijuana out of the hands of children, but it is really having the opposite effect. It is also going to cause other problems.

No, legalizing marijuana will not reduce access to it. Yes, organized crime will find ways around our laws. No, police officers cannot use magical Care Bear powers to fight drug-related violence and crime.

All that because the Prime Minister decided to make this an issue, to make it an electoral promise. He decided that this was urgent and that he had to legalize cannabis as quickly as possible without any respect for the concerns of scientists, doctors, or law enforcement officers.

What is more, the Prime Minister, who is supposedly a great friend to the first nations, did not even take into consideration their extremely serious concerns.

On top of all that, Canadian employers will have to deal with this situation. How will employers be able to monitor employees who work in manufacturing, in industries that require the use of dangerous equipment? We still do not have any answers on that. The government is rushing to legalize cannabis, but there are still unanswered questions.

The basic premise had to do with children. I will talk later about plants in homes, about how organized crime will get around the law, and about how children will be allowed to be in possession of marijuana. They will not be allowed to buy any, but they will be allowed to have it on them. It really does not make any sense.

Let's also talk about police officers. Over the weekend, a police officer gave me an example. He said that, under the existing legislation, when a police officer stops a vehicle and can smell marijuana, he or she has the right to search the vehicle. Most of the time, or quite often at least, when police officers conduct such a search, they find other drugs, such as amphetamines or cocaine, hidden in the vehicle. Having the authority to intervene because of the smell of marijuana often enables the police to discover hard drugs in such vehicles.

Three years ago, in Quebec City, where I live, the police stopped a tractor-trailer. They smelled drugs, searched the vehicle, and found a million dollars from the sale of drugs by organized crime hidden in it.

• (1205)

Now, police officers who smell marijuana will have to do some kind of yet-to-be-determined test to find out if a person is intoxicated, but they do not have the right to conduct other searches. These are real-life situations, not imaginary hypotheticals. Instead of helping police officers, the government is creating problems for them. Bill C-45 defies logic.

There is also the issue of market adjustment. Organized crime is not going away. Independent Liberal Senator Serge Joyal mentioned that, according to police, organized crime has already infiltrated Canada's medical marijuana market. He also said that 35 of Canada's 86 legal cannabis producers are financed in part by investors who use tax havens to hide their identity and that Cayman Islands investors have already pumped \$250 million into the Canadian cannabis industry.

Despite the Liberals' attempt to get this bill passed as quickly as possible, senators made a number of amendments, including an amendment that would require cannabis companies to publicly disclose the identity of their shareholders. That is a reasonable solution that the opposition can get behind. This amendment would make it impossible for organized crime to use tax havens to infiltrate the Canadian cannabis market. That should have been in there from the get-go. I hope our friends on the other side of the House will accept this amendment.

As far as possession of marijuana is concerned, that will be legal. Retailers will be allowed to sell marijuana and people will have to be at least 18 to buy it, but children like mine, who are 13 and 14, will be allowed to have marijuana in their possession. At the risk of sounding unparliamentary, that seems stupid. They will not be allowed to buy it, but they will be allowed to have between 10 and 15 joints on their person. My son could have between 10 and 15 joints on him and that would not be an offence or a crime, but he would not be allowed to buy those joints. There are so many things like that that we do not understand and that do not work. We think that there are still too many inconsistencies in Bill C-45.

Government Orders

Then there are the property owners. In Quebec, the Corporation des propriétaires immobiliers du Québec, or CORPIQ, cannot fathom why we would pass a law that would let people grow cannabis plants in apartments in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada. These plants need humidity to grow. People will grow them in closets and are going to do all sorts of things that will damage the apartments and cause problems for the owners, not to mention the issue of the odours. There still remain unanswered questions.

In that regard, I would like to sincerely thank the governments of Quebec and Manitoba, which resolutely refused to let people grow cannabis at home. However, the Prime Minister of Canada told the provinces that they could not prevent people from doing it. Now that the bill has passed and Quebec is saying no, while the federal government says yes, there could be a constitutional challenge over pot plants. Society has far more important problems. We do not need a constitutional battle over pot plants grown at home. I hope Quebec will continue its fight, and I will be supporting it 100%.

This issue is even creating problems at the Canada-U.S. border. The bill does not address those Americans who may travel to Canada with marijuana on them, thinking that it is legal. According to the legislation, when a Canadian border services officer stops an American who is in possession of marijuana, the traveller must be turned back to the United States, where he or she will be charged. Similarly, Canadians who are not careful and who are in possession of cannabis when they are stopped at the U.S. border will also be charged. This problem has not been fixed.

According to a report from US. Homeland Security, there is a significant problem with drugs being trafficked from Canada to the U.S. Nothing has been fixed.

• (1210)

I could have used much more time, but I can say that I am very happy with the Senate's work. I hope that the government will at least listen to reason here.

[English]

Mr. Bill Blair (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to clarify something for the member. He mentioned his concern that under our legislation a young person under the age of 18 would be able to legally possess cannabis in the province of Quebec. I want to inform him that the Province of Quebec recently enacted legislation which makes it an offence under provincial regulation to purchase, possess, or consume cannabis for any person under the age of 18.

It is legislation that is enforceable. It is an absolute prohibition that the police will be able to enforce, but it does not result in a criminal record for the child. It is exactly what the police have asked for. It is a ticketing regime that results in real consequences. Police can seize the drug, issue a ticket, and there is a fine. There are other restorative measures that can be instituted, but it is a complete prohibition.

I would also advise that virtually every province and territory has introduced legislation that has made it a provincial offence to purchase, possess, or consume cannabis for all young people under the age of majority. With that information, I wonder if the member might be reassured about his concern.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Madam Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's comments. However, I wonder why Bill C-45 includes a provision that would make cannabis possession by minors permissible. Youth under 18 would not be allowed to buy cannabis, of course, but they would be allowed to have the drug in their possession. The provinces are going to have to deal with that measure.

The federal government could have defined all the prohibitions. Instead, the government is allowing cannabis possession by minors and leaving the burden of regulation to the provinces, which will each handle it differently. Quebec has set out its rules, but if someone goes to New Brunswick there will be other rules. At some point, it is the federal government's responsibility to ensure that we have regulations that help the provinces instead of making things more complicated for them.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles for his excellent remarks.

It is a bit odd to hear our Liberal colleague boast about a provincial government decision. Need I remind the House that just last week the federal government disregarded the will of the provincial Liberal government to prohibit home grow? We know that under the current Prime Minister's government, there can be four pot plants in each of the millions of homes in Canada.

I have a question for my colleague. Will this measure, which would unfortunately allow home grow, help keep children away from marijuana or would the opposite happen? How will we be able to review and evaluate the quality of the marijuana? After all, people keep saying that legalization will bring with it higher-quality pot.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Madam Speaker, my colleague from Louis-Saint-Laurent asked an excellent question, which gets to the heart and to the reality of this whole issue.

Earlier I said that we do not live in a magical land of Care Bears. There are legal industries that are producing massive amounts of cannabis in greenhouses, funded by money coming from tax havens. Some people are having a grand old time. They are making money. Then, there is a huge number of apartments and houses, millions of possibilities and places where people can grow pot plants. In the Montreal area, there is even a Mafia organization, which I will not name, that is already using apartments belonging to different people. These people create a network, control people who grow pot plants in the apartments and houses, and then sell this pot.

As soon as home growing becomes legal, organized crime groups will start planning, as I said in my speech. Since it is legal, organized crime groups will take over 40 or 50 houses or apartments. People will grow the plants, harvest them, and sell the product, ultimately getting a percentage from the organized crime group. This is why, as soon as the government allows home grow, two networks will develop, namely the industrial manufacturing network and the underground network.

We cannot forget about children in all of this. When there are four pot plants in a home, young people can pick the plants and start selling them to their friends on the streets. This is why we do not understand the government's logic, and there are many people who feel the same way I do.

[English]

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-45, the cannabis act, a bill that would have a profound impact on our Canadian society.

The Liberal government's plan to legalize recreational marijuana has created a lot of uncertainty and unanswered questions. It is pushing this legislation forward without giving it the due diligence it requires. That is why it comes as no surprise this legislation has been sent back to us with so many amendments.

The priority of the government should be the health and safety of Canadians, but through legislative process, it has been clear that the Liberals are rushing to fulfill a political promise. At the outset, the Liberals set an arbitrary deadline to legalize the recreational use of marijuana, and the rush to legalize this harmful drug continues. This is despite concerns that have been raised from scientists, doctors, and law enforcement officials.

In this legislation, the Liberals have included a section outlining its purpose. The stated purpose of the cannabis act is to protect public health and safety, particularly that of young people, and that its purpose is to restrict access to cannabis for young people and to discourage its use. It also states that it sets out to reduce illicit activities and the burden on the criminal justice system. It states the goal of providing access to a quality-controlled supply of cannabis. Lastly, it wants to enhance public awareness of the health risks associated with cannabis.

Unfortunately, the legislation before us does not and will not achieve these goals. It is important to consider why this legislation does not achieve its stated purpose. We often hear from those in favour of legalizing the recreational use of marijuana that it is just a harmless drug. That is a myth. There is scientific evidence that marijuana is not a harmless drug, especially for young people. To quote the Canadian Medical Association:

Children and youth are especially at risk for marijuana-related harms, given their brain is undergoing rapid, extensive development.

Our understanding of the health effects of marijuana continues to evolve. Marijuana use is linked to several adverse health outcomes, including addiction, cardiovascular and pulmonary effects..., mental illness, and other problems, including cognitive impairment and reduced educational attainment. There seems to be an increased risk of chronic psychosis disorders, including schizophrenia, in persons with a predisposition to such disorders. The use of high potency products, higher frequency of use and early initiation are predictors of worse health outcomes.

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The health effects I just described are very serious. They come at a high cost to Canadian taxpayers, and an even higher individual cost to the person experiencing any of these health problems. Knowing this, the recreational use of marijuana should never be encouraged. This is particularly critical when it comes to young Canadians. A young person's brain continues to develop until the age of 25. Although provinces are able to set a higher age, the cannabis act recommends the age of 18 as a federal minimum. That means the Liberals are recommending legalizing marijuana for individuals seven years before their brain finishes developing.

Medical professionals have testified that increased use before the age of 25 increases the risk of developing mental disorders by up to 30% compared to those who have not used marijuana before the age of 25. I would argue that what one permits, one promotes, and knowing what one allows, one encourages. Knowing the medical facts we know, it is irresponsible to allow an 18-year-old to legally smoke recreational marijuana. The Liberals are normalizing drug use and knowingly putting Canada's young people at a disadvantage.

A concern was raised during the study of this bill at the House's health committee that by setting the age at 18 for legal recreational use, there was a greater chance it would land in the hands of even younger children.

● (1215)

The point was raised that children 16 or 17 years old are more likely to be around 18-year-olds than, say, a 21-year-old. This means that the legislation as it is could increase the likelihood of a minor using marijuana. Let us not forget that this legislation actually allows children aged 12 to 17 to possess up to five grams of marijuana. That is the equivalent to 10 to 15 joints. If the message the Liberals are trying to send to the youth is that they should not use marijuana, they have missed the mark. The legal quantity of marijuana possession for children aged 12 to 17 should be zero. Zero sends the right message.

A public education and awareness campaign would also help send the right message. A campaign of this regard should be implemented before the legalization of marijuana and not after. While Health Canada is putting together a program, there has been no indication that it will be rolled out before the legalization of marijuana, and there is no requirement of sorts. There are no provisions in the cannabis act for public education. If not rejected, this legislation should at least be put on pause until a public education plan is rolled out. It also should not be rushed ahead when provinces, municipalities, police forces, and employers are not ready to implement it.

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The belief that legalizing recreational marijuana use will eliminate the black market is also flawed. That outcome is dependent on a wide variety of factors, many of which are being left up to the provinces. The fact that this act legalizes home grow plants is actually more likely to result in an increase in the size of the black market. This bill allows individuals to grow four plants per dwelling, with no height restrictions on the plants. Four plants could yield up to 600 grams of marijuana. That is a large quantity and it could easily be trafficked. A network of home grows could easily contribute to organized crime. There is also the question of how the four plant policy will be enforced.

In addition to the impact on the black market, the home grow provision in this legislation also raises other concerns. When marijuana plants are grown in homes, marijuana becomes even more accessible to young Canadians. There is also no ability to control the quality of the marijuana that is grown in someone's home. This directly counteracts a stated purpose of this legislation.

The impact of marijuana plants on a home could be very significant. It is a known fact that the moisture from marijuana plants can create mould and spores in the structure of a home. This can impact the structural security of a home. It can also result in air quality that is harmful to a person's health.

There is also the concern that there is a 24 times greater incident of fire in residences growing marijuana. This creates even more danger for individuals living in apartments and multi-unit dwellings. This legislation also creates a unique concern for landlords.

I have raised many concerns with the legislation before us. I did not even get to the very valid concerns of many Canadians who are concerned with the odour of recreational marijuana use, or the issues of second-hand smoke and drug-impaired driving. Employers are also concerned with marijuana use in the workplace and its impact on workplace safety.

The cannabis act is irresponsible legislation. It fails to meet its intended purpose. It does not keep marijuana out of the hands of children. It does not keep profits out of the hands of criminals. It does not address the many concerns that have been raised by scientists, doctors, and law enforcement.

The cannabis act is being rushed through to fulfill a political promise, and doing so sacrifices public health and safety.

Conservatives will not support the Prime Minister's ill-conceived plan to legalize this harmful drug. Canadians deserve better.

• (1220)

Mr. Sean Fraser (Central Nova, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I disagree very strongly with the member's remarks.

She spent a lot of time canvassing many of the negative health impacts of cannabis, which I fully accept. In fact, she suggested that some advocates for the legalization of cannabis suggest that marijuana is some sort of a harmless drug. I have not heard that from any member in any party in the House, and I resent the fact that such a straw man argument was presented during the course of her remarks.

We have a system today that criminally prohibits possession and use, and it has proven to be incredibly ineffective. Canada is among

the very worst of any country in the world when it comes to the consequences that impact our youth today from the over-consumption of cannabis.

Why is the hon. member committing to a system that has proven to be ineffective, rather than trying something new, something that is based on the advice of experts, and something that will reduce consumption by young people and divert profits away from organized crime?

• (1225)

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Madam Speaker, in my previous line of work I worked a lot with children and youth, and I have worked in situations where psychiatrists cannot differentiate what is the marijuana consumption side effect and what is the psychosis, whether it is from depression, anxiety, or whatever it is. It makes it difficult to treat patients.

What is most alarming about all this is we have not even seen a public health campaign about this, and how we are going to make children aware that this is unsafe for them. The fear I have is that we are going to normalize this and hurt young Canadian children who will be our leaders for tomorrow.

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs), Lib.): Madam Speaker, the argument presented by the other side seems to be that this drug is so dangerous, has such extraordinarily harmful effects, is so volatile, and in particular has such a drastic impact on young children that we need to leave it in the hands of criminals. If this drug is as dangerous as the members say, it needs to be made illegal in terms of the current system, but the current system has not prevented it from getting into the hands of youth. In fact, the member opposite just said that people she sees are getting access to the drug, which means the former government's approach to this placed it in the hands of kids. If it is that dangerous, that system is unacceptable.

Clearly, a regulated system that restricts it and focuses on keeping it away from young people is a better way to go than simply the status quo, which the member has already said is so dangerous and so ill thought-out that people could not tell the difference between the psychotic episodes and consumption. Regulating it and keeping it out of the hands of young people is a responsible, smart thing to do. However, if it is this dangerous, why would the party opposite want to leave it in the hands of criminals to finance criminal behaviour in their communities?

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Madam Speaker, I am not sure if the member opposite listened to what I had to say.

The way this legislation is written, children aged 12 to 17 can be in possession of it. This is alarming. We do not have a public health campaign out there right now teaching children or talking about it with children, that this is potentially harmful and dangerous for them. I do not see how the government would protect children when the legislation is written as it is and the Liberals have refused amendments from the other place that would address this.

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Mr. Bill Blair (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to advise the member opposite that one of the harms we are trying to protect children from is getting criminal records, and so we worked with all the provinces and territories. The Province of Saskatchewan has actually enacted legislation that creates an offence for the purchase, possession, and consumption of cannabis for anyone under the age of majority. Therefore, the member's concern that young people would have legal access to this is simply not correct. It will be dealt with in provincial legislation, which is the proportional and appropriate legislative regulatory response.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk: Madam Speaker, I find that statement to be a little rich. It seems we have a government right now that decides when it wants to respect provincial jurisdiction and when it does not.

Mr. Bill Blair (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in the House to speak to Bill C-45, the cannabis act.

I would like to begin my remarks by acknowledging the very comprehensive and important work of the Senate. The depth and breadth of its review was unprecedented for any proposed federal legislation that has come before it. It included extensive studies by five committees, which together conducted 47 meetings over 195 hours and heard testimony from over 200 experts and witnesses.

We have followed this process very closely. We have listened very carefully to the thoughtful questions and observations put forth by the members of the other place. The country has been well served by their careful attention to this important issue, and we are deeply and sincerely appreciative of their hard work and wise counsel.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of the aboriginal peoples committee. The government's response benefited tremendously and was made better by its advice and advocacy. I am sincerely grateful for its advice and counsel, which I believe has significantly improved the government's response to indigenous community concerns.

The Senate's comprehensive study has also provided parliamentarians and Canadians alike with an opportunity to learn more about the government's policy to legalize and strictly regulate cannabis, including understanding the main objectives and features of the proposed framework. One of the things I have been struck by throughout this process is the overwhelming consensus among nearly all parties that the government must do more to protect the most vulnerable of our citizens—our kids—from the health and social harms that the current failing system of cannabis prohibition has led to.

Prohibition has not stopped our young people from accessing and using this drug. In fact, Canada's record of youth consumption of cannabis is among the worst in the world. Prohibition has enriched organized crime in the billions of dollars each year while exposing Canadians to an unregulated, untested, and unsafe drug. Finally, the failed system of criminal prohibition has resulted in the criminalization of hundreds of thousands of Canadians and contributed to an unjust disparity and impact on vulnerable communities.

Prohibition has failed. We cannot regulate and control a prohibited substance. It is only by ending the prohibition, which is what legalization is, that we are able to implement a comprehensive and far more effective system of strict regulatory control. It means replacing a dangerous system of illicit production and grow ops with a strictly regulated, licensed regime that provides for adherence to rigorous health and security standards, oversight, testing, and accountability. For the provinces and territories, it means displacing drug dealers and illicit dispensaries with a strictly regulated distribution system, which will do an infinitely better job of keeping cannabis out of the hands of kids and redirect revenues from criminal enterprises to the public good.

Bill C-45 acknowledges and respects the jurisdictions of the provinces and territories to strictly regulate all aspects of distribution and consumption to reduce the social and health harms related to the current failed system of cannabis control. I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge and thank each of the provinces and territories for their excellent collaborative work in bringing forward their respective legislative framework and, in particular, for providing a proportionate and enforceable prohibition for the possession, purchase, and consumption of cannabis for young people under the age of majority that will allow law enforcement to do their job of protecting youth but which will not expose our kids to the harm of a criminal record.

Although the government commends the valuable work done in the other place in conducting a thorough study of Bill C-45, it is our government's view that some of the amendments adopted would not fully support the bill's policy objectives and could have unintended consequences. For example, the other place adopted an amendment that would prohibit prosecution by indictment when an 18-year-old or 19-year-old distributed five grams or less of dried cannabis to a youth that is less than two years younger. The amendment would also allow for tickets to be issued in such circumstances. Finally, this amendment would also allow for a parent or guardian to share cannabis with their 16-year-old or 17-year-old children at home.

Our government has consistently indicated that the proposed cannabis act would not provide a mechanism whereby young persons could legally access cannabis. In fact, we strengthened penalties for adults who provide cannabis to minors or to use it to commit cannabis-related offences. However, the parental exception created by this amendment would essentially serve to create a legal supply channel in the cannabis act for 16-year-olds and 17-year-olds to access cannabis and would allow a parent or guardian to distribute up to 30 grams of dried cannabis to their 16-year-old or 17-year-old children or wards at home. A youth could in turn distribute up to five grams of dried cannabis received from their parent or guardian in the home with other youth outside the home.

● (1230)

Both the parental exception and the elimination of the ability to prosecute by indictment for close-in-age sharing of small amounts would serve to encourage and normalize cannabis use by our youth and is therefore not accepted by our government.

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Ultimately, the crown should retain discretion on how to proceed, based on the circumstances before it. By not accepting this amendment, such discretion would be preserved, and where appropriate, the crown could elect to proceed summarily. This amendment goes against the fundamental objective of the bill, and that is why we are unable to support it.

Next, the Senate has recommended an amendment that would require that the minister collect and publicly disclose the names of every holder of a licence or permit, including persons who have control of or shares in corporations holding a licence. In addition to raising significant concerns from a privacy perspective, this amendment would likely engender a number of significant operational challenges.

For example, the inherent volatility of shareholding in publicly traded corporations could make the proposed reporting requirements practically impossible to meet, and could cause extreme delays in licensing. Moreover, it could also impose unprecedented requirements on businesses operating in the legal cannabis industry, making their treatment inconsistent with the treatment of businesses operating in other sectors of the Canadian economy.

The proposed act was carefully designed to ensure that its current provisions comply with privacy and other obligations and that it respects our charter. Our government has robust physical and personal security screening processes in place for the existing cannabis for medical purposes industry, which is designed to guard against infiltration by organized crime. For example, all officers and directors of a company must undergo thorough law enforcement record checks prior to licensing.

As part of a new regulatory framework, Health Canada has proposed to expand the list of individuals who would require a security clearance to include the directors and officers of any controlling company, in addition to those of the licensed company. An amendment to Bill C-45, adopted by the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, would also give the minister expanded powers in this regard.

We have designed and implemented a rigorous and robust security framework that we believe will prevent organized crime and illegal money from infiltrating the legal cannabis market. For those reasons, we do not support this amendment.

Finally, I turn to the amendment proposed by the Senate with respect to allowing provinces to prohibit personal cultivation. The determination of four plants as an appropriate and reasonable limit to allow Canadians to engage in personal cultivation only for their use was arrived at after very careful consideration through examination of other jurisdictions and consultation across the country by both our task force and our senior officials. It was intended to allow those who may not otherwise have access to this drug, as a result of being from remote communities or perhaps being underprivileged, to have reasonable access. The limitation of four plants was also determined to be a safe limit, whereby the commercialization of that would be highly unlikely, and prevented by other sections in the act, and that any effort to sell that would be criminalized.

At the same time, our government has created an offence for producing more than four plants. However, we also have been very

clear that we have acknowledged the provincial jurisdiction to impose strict regulation in relation to personal cultivation. For example, we have acknowledged that any province can place limits on the number of plants up to four and can place restrictions and regulations determining limits on location, safety, security, health concerns, and the size of fences. They can impose a requirement for permits, for example, and fees to be paid.

What we have also recognized is that prohibition does not work, and the effort to continue to enforce a prohibition takes away a province's and a municipality's opportunity to regulate this behaviour. We have seen the failure of prohibition. We have seen it has resulted in an unsafe situation in all of our communities. It has put our kids at risk and enriched organized crime. We believe that by imposing a strict regulatory framework, federally, provincially, and municipally, we will be able to do a much better job of controlling this behaviour to ensure we reduce the social and health harms to our kids, protect our communities, and protect the health of our citizens.

Despite the disagreements we may have on specific amendments, I want to reiterate that based on our extensive study over the last two years, the government is confident that Bill C-45 represents a balanced approach that will help meet our objectives. This is why we believe the amendments proposed in the other place need to be carefully considered, with a view to maintaining that balance and avoid unintended consequences, through the implementation of a new regime.

• (1235)

Where a disagreement exists with respect to a provincial authority, our government is not telling the provinces and territories that they cannot strictly regulate. However, we have also acknowledged that there may be limits to their ability to do that. The government is not saying that the Province of Quebec cannot prohibit personal cultivation. Nor are we prepared to authorize that in our legislation. We recognize that the failure of prohibition should not be perpetuated and continued in the country when we have an opportunity to regulate this substance properly.

• (1240)

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's background as a police officer. He is right. No one in the House wants to see children or Canadians affected by this.

He talks a lot about prohibition. Yes, we know prohibition has not worked. However, there is a big difference between prohibition and normalization.

In Colorado, a report entitled, "Colorado's Legalization of Marijuana and the Impact on Public Safety", showed that before legalization in Colorado, it was 14th in the United States with respect to use. Upon legalization and normalization, it shot up to number one.

In Washington, according to the "Washington State Marijuana Impact Report, Northwest High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area", use among youth grew 43% under normalization and legalization.

Therefore, I would like to ask my colleague this. Why the rush toward the normalization of marijuana? We recognize prohibition does not work. However, the statistics in the U.S. have show that normalizing and legalizing it is catastrophic for youth. In Spokane, the DWIs for pot grew 1700% after legalization. Therefore, why the rush toward legalization when the police services have stated that they are not ready for it, and we have not seen education across the country about the effects of marijuana for students?

Mr. Bill Blair: Madam Speaker, I have conducted a very thorough review of the data that comes from those jurisdictions, and I am not familiar with the data the member quotes.

Let me be very clear on something. It is not the government's intention to normalize the use of this drug. In fact, we are taking a prohibited substance and lifting that prohibition so we can implement a strict system of regulatory control. We are also making significant investments of \$108.5 million into a public education campaign to inform Canadian youth, parents, teachers, and health care providers of the real social and health risks and harms that can affect children with respect to the early onset of use, and the higher frequency and higher potency of use.

Our experience with tobacco might be illustrative for the member opposite. Tobacco rates of use among Canadians used to be quite high in the country. For example, approximately 22% of Canadian adults were using tobacco, with similar numbers with respect to our kids. However, through the imposition of strict regulations, which controlled packaging, advertising, and the access that children had to it, and a public education campaign about the risks of this drug, we have seen very significant reductions in use, and a de-normalization of the use of tobacco. We believe that experience can be replicated with cannabis if we make the appropriate investments, and we have already made those investments.

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened to the speech by my colleague across the way. One of the comments he made was that the Senate had an opportunity to move the bill to five different committees for a very robust study. Unfortunately, the government did not listen to all of the advice that came out of the Senate.

Could the parliamentary secretary tell the House why he and his government did not allow this House to have the same kind of robust study?

Mr. Bill Blair: Madam Speaker, quite frankly, I am rather perplexed by the member's comments. The member may recall that Bill C-45 passed second reading and went to committee. That committee heard from over 100 witnesses, over the course of a very long and concentrated session of testimony, before reporting back to the House. It made a number of amendments and recommendations to the House, which were adopted. We moved forward to third reading, and then it went to the Senate.

This is an issue that has been examined extensively for over 50 years. When we became government, we formed a task force with expertise from the areas of justice, public safety, public health, and problematic substance use. We sent it across the country. It received

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over 30,000 submissions from Canadians on this issue. There were over 700 written submissions. It conducted dozens of round tables and town halls across the country, gathering information before it made recommendations to the government. Therefore, this has been perhaps one of the most consulted and collaborative processes ever undertaken by a government.

We are grateful for the important work done by the Senate. It has contributed enormously to this discussion. However, we believe we have a well-informed evidence-based policy framework for the strict regulation of cannabis, and we are prepared to move forward on it.

• (1245)

Mr. Dan Vandal (Saint Boniface—Saint Vital, Lib.): Madam Speaker, in the past, the city I represent has had problems with gangs, whether it is street gangs or motorcycle gangs, and a lot of that is around the control of drugs generally and cannabis specifically. That has been an issue in the community I and the city I represent.

Could the member speak from his experience as a police chief of Toronto about similar situations in Toronto?

Mr. Bill Blair: Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his observation, and I have exactly the same observation in my town. We saw many instances.

Cannabis, the drug itself, has never killed anybody, but I have been to far too many crime scenes where people, usually young men, have been shot to death in a dispute over the territory in which this drug is being sold. Cannabis trafficking, particularly among street gangs, is a trap for those kids, and it is a dangerous trap.

We have seen far too much violence in our communities directly related to this illicit activity. Displacing that from our communities, giving Canadian consumers a legitimate choice, instead of going into those underprivileged areas, could have the affect of reducing the violence in those activities. Just as important, we will not have enforcement in those communities for simple possession of cannabis because we are changing that system. The very first criminal charge that most of those young kids get is for possession of cannabis. This starts them on a lifelong path where they are labelled as criminals. It limits their opportunities and really restricts their future.

There is an opportunity to do it better on behalf of those kids, to make it safer for them, but also to create better futures.

Mr. Kelly McCauley: Madam Speaker, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police and the chief of police of Edmonton have stated very recently that they do not have a reliable way to measure pot impairment for driving.

Again, why are we rushing ahead with this, when the Chiefs of Police Association and various other chiefs of police say that there is no reliable way to measure pot impairment for drivers.

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Mr. Bill Blair: Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to advise the member that president of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, as well as the chair of the law amendments committee and the traffic committee, appeared before the justice committee on Bill C-46, the impaired driving bill. They commended the government for the comprehensive legislation that was brought forward. It responded to their concerns.

In 2008, they asked for money to train drug addiction experts; they were ignored. In 2009, they asked for mandatory breathe screening; they were ignored. In 2013, they asked for access to oral fluid test kits; they were ignored.

We said that we would provide them with access to those resources and that training and give them the legislative authority to use them. The very last comment from the president of the CACP was that this government was listening.

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Madam Speaker, one of the things we hear coming out of Colorado, and I read the news media and we can take it for what it is, is that about 50% of production, marketing and selling is still done by the criminal side.

Colorado is finding the same thing around pricing of contraband cigarettes, and in Canada we have a huge share of the market in contraband cigarettes. The government talks about taking it out of the hands of criminals, but then I read that Colorado says that 50% is still handled by the criminal element in the market, that they can cut prices and sell it as they choose, all outside of government control.

Taking it out of the hands of the criminal element does not seem to be working in Colorado. How is it going to be different here?

Mr. Bill Blair: Madam Speaker, quite frankly, if organized crime in this country is making \$8 billion a year, and if in the first year we are successfully taking 50% away from them, \$4 billion out of the hands of organized crime, that is a darn good start in my opinion.

Once we give Canadian adult consumers a legitimate choice, a safer, healthier choice, coupled with the fact that we are keeping all of the criminal authorities, penalties, and offences in place so the police can deal effectively with organized crime, we are going to put pressure on it in the enforcement while outflanking it with a new competition in the marketplace.

Ultimately, our goal is to completely displace the criminal element. I have fought organized crime most of my life and if I had the opportunity to take \$4 billion out of its pockets in a single year, I would take it.

• (1250)

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Madam Speaker, today I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Provencher.

I am here today to speak against Bill C-45 and its legalization of cannabis. This bill is supposedly intended to protect youth, regulate the industry, and eliminate the black market. Not only would it not do any of those things, it would also prevent Canada from upholding several of our international treaties, something very dear to me as a former diplomat, and would likely cause additional tension with provincial governments.

Doctors and other medical professionals have found that the brain continues to develop until the age of 25 and that marijuana use before that age will actually increase an individual's risk of developing mental disorders, such as schizophrenia, depression, and anxiety, by up to 30%. For this reason, one of the principal intentions of this bill was to keep marijuana out of the hands of children. This legislation would be unsuccessful in that regard for two reasons.

The first reason is that the legislation would allow possession for minors, children aged 12 to 17. I have a son who is seven years old, and the thought that he would be able to possess cannabis five years from now is terrifying to me. They would be allowed to possess up to five grams of marijuana, which is approximately 10 to 15 joints. There is also no provision to prevent them from selling or distributing cannabis to other 12- to 17-year-olds. The amount minors are allowed to possess should be zero so that we can send the right message on the dangers for youth. Youth should not be using it and therefore should not be allowed to carry it. Again, the thought of this being anywhere near my young son frightens me.

The second reason is that this bill would also set the age of 18 as the federal minimum. The Canadian Medical Association and other medical professionals recommend increasing the age at which a person can legally consume marijuana to at least 21. Although under the age of 21 there is potential for mental disorders, as previously mentioned, they also recognize that if the age is set too high, people will continue illegal consumption.

If we want to keep marijuana out of the hands of children, 18 is too young an age. Typically, 16- and 17-year-olds hang out with 18-year-olds. The majority of us in the House have certainly been to secondary school.

Another goal of this legislation was to help eliminate the black market for marijuana. Having worked in Central America and Latin America, the black market for narcotics is very well known to me and concerns me very much.

This is extremely unlikely to happen, because it is dependent on many factors. Factors such as pricing, distribution, production, and packaging are not included in this bill. They are, rather, left to the provinces to legislate. Additionally, allowing people to grow marijuana at home would only increase the size of the black market, as Canadians would be permitted to grow yields of up to 600 grams in their homes. Such a large amount of marijuana can easily lead to trafficking and make it extensively harder to enforce.

We heard this from Joanne Crampton, the assistant commissioner for federal policing criminal operations in the RCMP, who stated:

organized crime is a high priority for federal policing, in particular, for the RCMP. We target the highest echelon within the organized crime world. We're very cognizant...and realize that the chances of organized crime being eliminated in the cannabis market would be.... It's probably naive to think that could happen.

She said it is "probably naive". This is yet another goal of this legislation that would not be achieved.

This legislation is also being rushed through Parliament without necessary debate or consultation. We have heard repeatedly from municipal and provincial governments that they will not have the necessary time or resources to adequately respond to the impact Bill C-45 would have on both Canadians and our communities.

There are numerous organizations and associations that have asked to push back the arbitrary deadline. For example, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police asked the government to extend the deadline. I think "asking" is a subtle word. I would say that "begging" would be more appropriate.

• (1255)

Over 68,000 police officers in Canada will need specific training in the wake of this monumental legislative change, and a few months is not a realistic time frame within which we can do this. If police are not prepared to deal with the legalization of marijuana due to inadequate training, this may lead to poor decisions and result in bad case law for any new legislation. This is important, because law is based upon precedent, and we are going into a time when these precedents will be set for the future.

We need our law enforcement in Canada to have the proper ability and resources to uphold the law. Police will require final legislation from all levels of government before being able to begin their planning and training. The government should have provided police forces with clearer direction in this regard. Provinces, municipalities, police forces, and our indigenous communities have made it clear that they are not ready to implement this legislation and that more time would have allowed for adequate consultation to develop a successful framework.

There will also be major international implications from implementing this legislation. The legalization of marijuana does not comply with three United Nations treaties: the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and the 1988 Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Might I add, as a former diplomat, that I cannot see how this could not possibly affect the Vienna Convention as well in regard to consular matters.

We also know that this could cause additional tension with our southern neighbours, the United States. Officials at United States' border crossings have been asking individuals whether they have consumed marijuana, and if the response is yes, these individuals have been denied entry by our next-door neighbour. This will be problematic when individuals' legal marijuana use in Canada results in their consistently being denied entry into the United States.

At the health committee, we heard that the former mayor of Grand Forks, Brian Taylor, was barred from going back to the United States due to a "relationship with marijuana". A relationship: those are pretty strong words.

By the way, Grand Forks is a beautiful place. I went there as part of my honeymoon. I loved it there. It sits near a river. There is a presidential museum there, which we had the opportunity to visit.

Getting back to the bill, not having a solution to this problem may cause additional tension in the context of already hostile NAFTA negotiations. This is a serious issue that is still unresolved.

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This legislation is also likely to cause jurisdictional problems here at home. Quebec and Manitoba have taken a strong stance against home grown marijuana, but the government will force all provinces to allow home growth, contrary to a unanimous amendment from the Senate.

Provincial governments will bear much of the burden of this legislation when it comes to regulations on distribution, production, and enforcement, so it is only fair that they have discretion in this area. This is yet another case of the federal government forcing its policies on provincial governments, much like it is trying to do with the carbon tax. It is very similar indeed.

The bill is extremely worrisome, as it contains some major issues. The Standing Committee on Health heard from many witnesses on Bill C-45, and the government keeps failing to implement their recommendations. These concerns are from respectable establishments, such as the Canadian Medical Association and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. Some significant and well-known organizations in the nation are saying that they are not ready, that this legislation is not ready, and that they require more time.

I always say that we will be the official opposition that holds this legislation to account through enforcement, through distribution, and through education.

If my Liberal colleagues across the floor truly cared about the well-being of Canadians, they would not be putting this legislation forward in its current form. We need to stand up for the safety of all Canadians and vote against Bill C-45.

• (1300)

Mr. Bill Blair (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I worked on organized crime investigations for many years. I also chaired the national Organized Crime Committee and served on the national executive committee of the Criminal Intelligence Service Canada. I have been called many things, but never naive.

The member expressed her concern about the safety of Canadians, and I share that concern. In the bill we brought forward to deal with impaired driving, there is a thing called mandatory alcohol screening. At one point, the Conservatives voted unanimously in support of it when it was contained in a private member's bill, and then they voted unanimously against it when it was in a government bill. It will likely come back before the House. The evidence with respect to that measure is overwhelming. Mandatory screening could prevent between 25% and 35% of lives lost to impaired driving.

I wonder if the member might comment on her position with respect to that in as much as she has expressed her concern about the safety of Canadians.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Madam Speaker, I really like apples, and I really like oranges. However, I do not think one can compare apples to oranges. I think that is what my colleague across the way is trying to do, compare apples to oranges.

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The reality is that there is no mechanism right now by which enforcement can effectively determine impairment. This is determined. We want to ensure that all organizations and all aspects of society are prepared for this. Right now, this is simply not the case.

This is what we are asking for. We are asking for more time to not only better evaluate this bill but for the municipalities and provinces that have responsibility for enforcement organizations to be prepared for this.

How do they like them apples?

Mr. Bill Blair: Madam Speaker, there is one other issue I want to address.

The member indicated that she believes that the police services have said that they are not ready. I want to share with her that the leadership of the RCMP, the Ontario Provincial Police, the Sûreté du Québec, and the Toronto Police Service, which represent about 65% of all police officers in this country, have said that they are ready.

I have read the newspapers as well. There are individual chiefs who, on the cusp of retirement, have said that they do not think they can be ready. However, when the largest police services in the country, which are dealing with the most complex national issues anywhere, have said that they are ready to go and have that level of readiness, I think we should respect that leadership and their indications.

If the member has spoken to a couple of individuals who do not think they are ready, then perhaps we could just refer them to the leadership of the RCMP, the OPP, the Toronto police, and others.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Madam Speaker, what would happen if we let 35% of criminals out of the prisons? What would happen if we let 35% of people drive drunk? Thirty-five per cent is too much.

We need 100% readiness, 100% confidence from our forces across the nation that they are ready to deal with the implementation of this legislation. Sixty-five per cent is not enough, and I point to the examples I just gave. It is not enough. This legislation would have such a monumental impact on the safety and well-being of Canadians that 65% is not enough. Canadians and our forces must be 100% ready.

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Madam Speaker, as a former principal, students having alcohol in a high school was something we really did not allow. However, under this legislation, those youth in high school would have it.

The member has very large concerns about youth and possession. Would she like to make a statement about youth and possession?

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Madam Speaker, as I mentioned, I have a young son. He is seven years old, and the thought that he could possess any amount of marijuana, never mind the amount outlined in this bill, within five years is terrifying to me. I like to think that I am a good parent in the sense that we would have conversations about the things that exist out there in the school and in the friend environment. However, the reality is that there could be other children his age who have possession of this substance and are distributing it at school.

This is something that very much concerns me as a parent, and as my hon. colleague pointed out, is something that is and should be of concern for educators as well.

It just shows again how—

• (1305)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I did allow the member some additional time.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Provencher.

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am thankful for the opportunity to speak this afternoon on Bill C-45, an Act respecting cannabis and to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Criminal Code and other Acts. Bill C-45 was first introduced in this place on April 13, 2017, just over a year ago. It is remarkable that the Liberal government, in just a little over a year, is desperately trying to force this proposal through. Although there has been a great deal of work done around the bill, it is abundantly clear that this has happened far too quickly. The Liberals are rushing through this legislation to meet their political deadline, not a well-thought-through plan, but a deadline that is self-imposed. This is despite very serious concerns that were raised by scientists, doctors, and law enforcement officials.

I want to note from the outset that I do not support the legalization of marijuana. The Conservative Party has adopted a much more measured and responsible approach to keeping minor marijuana possession illegal, but to make it a ticketable offence. This is the position that has long been adopted by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. Unfortunately, Liberal backbenchers appear willing to support the Prime Minister's dangerous proposal. I believe we have a moral responsibility to soberly consider the consequences of legalizing marijuana in so many areas of Canadian life.

The fact that the Liberals are continuing down this reckless road without having a fully fleshed-out legal framework in place for the significant supplementary conditions is irresponsible. The only appropriate way to move forward with a bill of this scope, if that is truly what the Liberals wish to do, is to move cautiously and carefully. Anything less represents a profound failure to ensuring that these changes do not increase risks to Canadian children and families.

It is the primary duty of any government to keep its citizens safe. The specific goals of Bill C-45 are outlined in clause 7, and they include protecting youth, regulating the industry, and eliminating the black market. The problem is that Bill C-45 will accomplish none of these goals. I will focus for the most part on my concerns around protecting our youth.

Mr. Marco Vasquez, a former police chief in the town of Erie, Colorado, had this to say to the Standing Committee on Health:

When you increase availability, decrease perception of risk, and increase the public acceptance of any commodity, you will see increased use. Once we see that increased use, it's very difficult to keep marijuana out of the hands of our youth. We know from validated studies that marijuana use for youth under 30 years old, especially chronic use, can have an adverse effect on brain development. We also know that one in six youth become addicted to marijuana.

We've certainly seen an increased use of marijuana in Colorado, and I believe that the increased use will ultimately increase disorder and risk factors for our youth. We're already seeing signs of increased disorder within our communities.

Dr. Laurent Marcoux, president of the Canadian Medical Association also noted:

Children and youth are especially at risk of harm, given their brain's development. And they are among the highest users of cannabis in Canada.

To better protect this part of the population, we are recommending that the age of legalization be set at 21 years. The quantities and the potency of cannabis should also be more restricted to those under age 25.

Despite these increased risks, however, evidence shows that youth today do not believe cannabis has serious health effects. A comprehensive public health strategy for cannabis must therefore include education, similar to what has been done with tobacco.

Educational strategies should be implemented before, and no later than the enactment of any legislation in order to increase awareness of the harms and to conduct further research on its impact.

These are just a couple of the comments on the matter of youth consumption of cannabis. Currently, Bill C-45 recommends the age of 18 as a federal minimum, but medical professionals have testified that the brain continues to develop until the age of 25. Increased use before the age of 25 increases one's risk of developing mental disorders like schizophrenia, depression, and anxiety by up to 30%, compared to those who have not used marijuana under the age of 25. This is why the CMA and the other medical professionals recommended raising the age at which a person can consume marijuana to at least age 21.

Another challenge with the bill is that children ages 12 to 17 are able to possess up to five grams of marijuana. As the points I have just raised will underscore, this is ridiculous in light of the medical evidence of the harm it can cause to youth. Bill C-45 offers no provision to prevent them from selling or distributing cannabis to other 12- to 17-year-olds.

• (1310)

I turn now to the home grow provisions included in this bill. Bill C-45 would allow four plants per dwelling, with no height restriction on the plants. If grown in optimal conditions, this could yield as much as 600 grams of marijuana. What we heard from plenty of testimony at the health committee is that there is a great deal of apprehension around home grow. These concerns were raised by most medical groups and police forces who appeared.

For one thing, this proposal absolutely would not keep marijuana out of the hands of youth. If it is in the home, youth will have access to it. Furthermore, there is no requirement to lock up the marijuana if the home has people under the age of 18 living in it, or even just frequenting it. What we have seen in other jurisdictions is that by legalizing homegrown marijuana, that area has been hugely penetrated by organized crime. This is why the State of Washington, for example, does not allow home grow, except for medically fragile persons who cannot get to a dispensary. It has been able to reduce organized crime to less than 20% of the market.

Dr. Kevin Sabet, president of Smart Approaches to Marijuana, told the health committee:

We are deluding ourselves if we think that major drug trafficking organizations will not exploit every chance they get to have a way to be legitimized through the legal market. We're seeing this in other states. We're also deluding ourselves to think that they will go away and not try to undercut the government price of cannabis. The economics rule the day here in terms of price. The lower the drug price, the more likely someone is to use, and the illegal market can easily undercut the legal market.

Government Orders

I want to speak for a moment about my province of Manitoba as well. The Government of Manitoba made a responsible decision to prohibit home grow in the province. This decision will cut out more of the black market and better protect children. Unfortunately, the Liberals appear poised to reject an amendment that would confirm the ability of provinces to make these sorts of localized decisions within their own territories. Quebec and Nunavut have also expressed a desire to take similar steps in their respective legislatures.

The Liberal government has thrown a lot at the provinces and territories with Bill C-45, and to reject an amendment that would help provinces better manage this transition to legal marijuana would indicate a significant lack of judgment. I hope that the Liberals will make the right choice and help provinces make the best decisions possible for their residents.

My wife is a very good cook and baker, and when she bakes a batch of cookies or cakes or brownies, not cannabis brownies, but real brownies made with cocoa, she does not put them on the counter thinking that they are not available to children. With the legislation before us, we are going to see home grow marijuana readily available to youth in kitchens, living rooms, family rooms, and dens. The ill-conceived and poorly thought-out plan of legalizing home grow operations makes one of the Liberals' priorities, which is protecting youth, completely unattainable, because it is going to be easily accessible.

When I get a prescription for pain medication after surgery, I do not take that prescription and leave it lying on the counter where it is easily accessible to children, for example, in the sunlight where it can grow. I put that prescription in the cabinet where it is inaccessible to children.

We tell children not to play with matches. We do not keep matches within the reach of children, yet we are going to have homegrown marijuana within the reach of our youth and children. We are absolutely going to be inviting them to play with this dangerous chemical.

It is irresponsible for the government to think it is reaching this objective of protecting our youth by allowing home grow operations to be legitimate and forcing the provinces to agree. It talks about provinces having the ability to set their own regulations, and indeed some of them have. I compliment my Manitoba government for establishing stricter regulations as far as the age by which possession and use will be accepted. However, not allowing the provinces to establish restrictions on home grow is irresponsible.

• (1315)

Mr. Bill Blair (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the member opposite for his remarks and for his hard work on committee. We always appreciate his contributions.

Government Orders

I was going to begin by sharing with him the provisions in Manitoba's Bill 11 regarding the prohibition on cannabis, which actually makes it an offence for the possession, consumption, and purchase of cannabis for persons under the age of majority in that province. The member is obviously aware of it, notwithstanding he expressed concern that it was somehow going to be made legal.

I would point out to the member opposite that we have acknowledged the provincial and territorial jurisdiction to place restrictions on personal cultivation and its location, to impose such things as restrictions on and requirements for fencing, security, safety, sanitation, smell abatement, and not having it in proximity to schools or other public places frequented by children. We have acknowledged the authority of provincial jurisdiction to place whatever restriction they believe are appropriate in order to regulate this substance, and the personal cultivation of this substance, only for personal use, in a safe and responsible way.

We have also acknowledged that prohibition takes away the opportunity to regulate it. Therefore, we have not said to the Province of Manitoba that it cannot regulate it in this way, but we are not changing our legislation to allow for prohibition when the evidence is overwhelming that prohibition has failings.

Mr. Ted Falk: Madam Speaker, as for the age of majority, the member is slightly off there. I think Manitoba has opted to go with 19 as the age, and not 18, which is a responsible decision.

I disagree with the member very strongly that children would not have easier access to marijuana under the bill. The government should recognize the concerns the provinces have already established with the homegrown aspect of their legislation. If the provinces are identifying some serious concerns, and the Senate has identified them, why do we not go along?

Obviously, there are some experts outside of this House. I know it is hard to believe, because we think we are all experts here, but there are experts outside of this place who have very valid opinions. I think it would be wise to acknowledge some of those other opinions and to give them some of the things they need.

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Madam Speaker, one of the issues we raised earlier was the amount of officers across the country who need training on impairment. Our police chief in Edmonton stated that it is very expensive and a huge burden on municipalities. The public safety minister has stated that the government would provide funding for this, and said, "a long way to go before the summer so we're all working on all fronts to get this adopted.... We're also working on the accreditation...testing machines", etc., and we are going to be funding it.

However, in the main estimates, which is the spending authority for the government, there is not one single penny listed under Public Safety for funding to help municipalities or the RCMP. In the vote 40, the slush fund that the Liberals have set up, which is supposedly to get money out the door faster, there is not one penny under Public Safety to help out municipalities. In the departmental plan, which is supposed to be setting out priorities for the year, it does not mention a single result or goal for assisting municipalities in the training of officers.

I would ask my colleague, does this sound like the government, as the Minister of Public Safety says, is stepping up to help municipalities and, if so, where is all the money hidden?

Mr. Ted Falk: Madam Speaker, with regard to where the money is going to come from to train all of the law enforcement officials to deal with this new epidemic we are creating, which is the excessive use of marijuana, there is no money.

We have heard at committee that it is going to cost an average of \$20,000 per law enforcement individual to be trained to detect impairment by cannabis. There has been no money set aside for the RCMP or other law enforcement agencies to train their officers to properly detect and determine it.

The other thing is that there has been no legislation yet adopted, nor will it soon be adopted, that would establish limits for impairment and medically approved devices that need to be purchased by all of these police forces. That is another cost that I do not think the government has at all anticipated nor provided for.

It is reckless on the government's part to push its political agenda in trying to get the bill approved quickly. I think it needs more time. We need to make sure that the regulations are in place.

• (1320)

Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to the amendments to Bill C-45, respecting the legalization of cannabis. I will be sharing my time with the member for Markham—Unionville.

There is no question that the current Liberal government is intent on pushing this bill through, despite numerous concerns voiced by experts, by law enforcement, and by Canadians across this country, including school boards, from coast to coast to coast. This is not a bill that should be forced through Parliament on a whim. As Parliament has spent many months studying the implications of this bill, many concerns and problems with the bill have been brought forward, as we have heard continuously in the last hour or so in the House. It is critically important for all Canadians that the current Liberal government work to resolve these problems, and that it listen to these concerns rather than try to push this bill through at all costs.

The Senate, as we know, has returned Bill C-45 to the House with 45 amendments, but the government has agreed to only 29 of them. The government has no plans to resolve any of the problems, which are still left unaddressed given its rejection of other crucial amendments. However, notably, the Liberals are refusing to allow provinces to determine on their own whether to ban cultivation of marijuana in individual homes. This is a big issue. Provinces such as Manitoba and Quebec have already signalled their deep concern with the negative social impacts that would occur as a result of allowing households to grow up to four marijuana plants. These provinces have concerns and they want to have the power to ban homegrown marijuana cultivation, but the current Liberal government has blatantly ignored these concerns and has said, "absolutely not".

Government Orders

Most of the medical groups and the police services that have appeared before the House committees studying this bill have said they are against the provision in Bill C-45 to allow homegrown marijuana. Even if these households contain small children, even if this provision would allow organized crime to exploit homegrown marijuana production, and even if the police have said they will have serious difficulty monitoring whether people are growing no more than four plants in their homes, the government has said no to those provisions. The Liberals have shown that they care more about pushing through this bill as soon as possible than they care about public safety or about fixing the significant flaws in the bill. This action is totally unacceptable, and it also demonstrates clearly that the Liberals have their priorities backwards.

I spoke to many real estate people in my province of Saskatchewan, and actually on lobby day many of them came through our offices here, representing the Canadian real estate boards. They are also concerned. There are no landlord-tenant regulations for growing four plants in a home that maybe somebody is renting. This is something that needs to be discussed with the Canadian real estate board, and it has yet to do so.

In March of this year, I spent eight days touring various communities in Nunavut. I visited eight or nine schools on our trip, and that was really enjoyable. While I was meeting with the people of these communities, I heard many serious concerns with this bill, and how it would negatively impact the well-being of these northern communities. We should say right off the bat that there are no health centres in Nunavut for people struggling with addictions. I heard time and again there is not one facility in Nunavut that handles addictions, so when people have a problem they will be flown either to Winnipeg or all the way to Montreal. These people want to stay in their communities, yet they have no addiction facilities. Perhaps we should start there with at least one addiction facility in Nunavut and work out from there, but no, this bill will pass and we will see the horrific incidents that will happen time and again in Nunavut because of this. While the Liberals are taking no steps to mitigate the negative consequences that this bill would have in these communities in Nunavut, many of the elders are really concerned with this cannabis bill and they have not been consulted.

• (1325)

I found that first-hand when I toured each village up in Nunavut. Many of the elders are really concerned with this cannabis bill, and they have not been consulted. The government claims it consults indigenous peoples, and yet seven or eight of the Inuit communities I saw had not been consulted on this bill as of March.

The government wants to make sure at all costs that provincial and territorial governments will not be able to ban the homegrown marijuana plants within their own jurisdictions. This is not at all helpful, and it does nothing to address the many concerns I heard during my visits to these communities in late February and March. These people are being ignored by this Liberal government, because the Liberals' priority is to push this bill through at any cost.

The role of Parliament, of course, is to ensure that bills passed are for the betterment of all Canadians and do not cause harm to people across the country. Actually, the way in which Bill C-45 is being

handled by the current government suggests in no way, shape, or form that the best interests of Canadians are being attended to.

We have talked to many people in this country about the bill. The number one consideration is the education aspect of it. In December, the government began its advertising about cannabis legislation. Where should it have started? I would think it should have contacted the Canadian school boards for a start. Does the government not think we should be in every classroom in this country talking about the good and the bad about cannabis? The government has not done anything at the school board level in this country.

I know this because I have a daughter in the city of Saskatoon who is a teacher. She is teaching grades 7 and 8. They have not even discussed this bill, and it is coming forth right away. I also have a son in Alberta who teaches at a junior college in Lethbridge. They have not even talked about this. These are kids in grade 9, 10, and 11, yet these schools have not talked about this bill and how it will be worked out in the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

When the minister brought this bill forward, we were told that a vast education program would come with it. We have seen one or two ads on television, but let us get to the grassroots and to the kids who are in grade 6, 7, 8, and beyond. Why would we not talk about this bill in schools? Why would we not give each school in this country some literature so they can talk about the harmful effects of cannabis? The government has done none of it.

I was a school board trustee for nine and a half years. I asked the government questions time and time again about the education of this bill. Representatives told me it had hundreds of thousands of dollars to spend on education. It has done next to nothing.

Schools are petrified that come September, they are the ones that will have to deal with this. They will have to deal with seven-year-olds coming to school with cannabis in their pocket, and yet none of the education has been done.

An hon. member: Oh, come on.

Mr. Kevin Waugh: What does the member mean by "Come on", Madam Speaker? In our schools in Saskatoon that has happened already. That is how much members know about this. They have no idea what goes on in our communities, that we are trying to give our students in elementary school and secondary school better lives. Instead, the government is just pushing Bill C-45 ahead without any consultation with the people who it affects most of all, which is our young people.

Shame on the government. It has not done the consultation it said it was going to do. It has not reached out to the Canadian School Boards Association. I know this because I have talked to the Saskatchewan school boards. The government has done nothing. Shame on it for pushing Bill C-45 without talking to the people who it affects the most, which is our kids. They are our future.

I cannot support this bill without the consultation that the government said it was starting months ago. The government has done nothing and it should be ashamed. There is no way those on this side are going to support Bill C-45.

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• (1330)

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart (Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Madam Speaker, one thing you mentioned in your speech is that you do not feel that this—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I do want to remind the Parliamentary Secretary that she is to address her questions and comments to the Chair.

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart: Madam Speaker, one thing the member opposite mentioned in his speech was that he did not feel outreach had been done, and that we are not talking to students about cannabis. I have heard this before. I have a 15-year-old daughter in high school now, and I said to her, "Listen, I have heard from some colleagues that they are not hearing about this educational piece we are doing on cannabis. Have you heard anything about it?" She said to me that it was in her news feed all the time on all the social media forums.

I would just like to comment that we are not the audience at which this education plan is directed, so it is quite possible that my colleagues are not seeing the impact of this education in their own news feeds. However, it is happening.

How does my colleague across the way think we should best educate the students about the concerns we have with cannabis, about its proper use, and about the legislation that is coming through?

Mr. Kevin Waugh: Madam Speaker, not everybody follows Facebook; not everyone follows Twitter. What does the member think this government should have done back in December, as it was proposing this bill to come forward this year?

Does the member not think it should have reached out to the Canadian School Boards Association? Does the member not think it should have reached out to all school divisions in this country, with some literature, with some pamphlets, with some education on it, or maybe even a video or two?

That would seem to be the wise thing to do. We just heard from the hon. member that the government has done none of this. It is relying on Facebook and Twitter. Is that not disgusting, that the government has never once gone into the schools in this country to tell people about the effects of this cannabis bill, Bill C-45?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it would be highly irresponsible for anyone to actually believe that, today, there is not cannabis in our classrooms. That is the reality of the situation in North America, in the U.S., in Canada, and in the western world, nowhere do we have a higher usage by young people of cannabis, in one way or another.

Today we have gangs that are selling cannabis to those 12- and 13-year-olds. By legalizing and regulating cannabis, we will help young people and will take hundreds of millions of dollars away from criminal elements in our society. We will be able to use that money better, whether it is in health care or whatever else it might be.

Would my friend across the way not at the very least acknowledge what the rest of Canadian society already knows, that there is already a general awareness and usage of cannabis among young people,

virtually higher usage than in any other country in the western world?

Mr. Kevin Waugh: Madam Speaker, I would acknowledge that there is marijuana in every school in this country. There is no question about that. Does that make it right? Of course it does not make it right.

What are we going to do to talk about the health of the cannabis bill that is coming forward? I question it. I still think we will have an underground economy in marijuana in our country, and I do not think this bill talks about that at all. We have some issues here with this bill. It has been fast-tracked. We all know that. I just do not think the government has done its due diligence.

One of the questions I would like to ask the hon. member is about reserves in this country that control their own police forces. They have not been consulted at all. These are police forces within indigenous communities. They do not have the money to do training on cannabis, and yet the government is going through with this. First nations, on reserves, have said loudly that they wanted in on this. They want training, and yet there is nothing from the public services minister. There is nothing that will give police on reserves, that are run by indigenous people, the right to do this.

• (1335)

Mr. Bob Saroya (Markham—Unionville, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to once again speak on an issue that I and many Canadians are deeply concerned about. I rise to speak against Bill C-45. This bill would legalize marijuana in Canada, a dangerous drug that is nothing less than damaging and addictive. I have been very clear that I am against this piece of legislation. I have taken the time to listen to experts from all backgrounds, and the findings continue to be the same: Marijuana is dangerous and Canada needs to think twice before going through with this bill. The Liberals really do not seem to get it.

Let me remind us all of the facts. According to the Canadian Medical Association, increased use of marijuana before the age of 25 severely impacts brain development. This means that this drug should not be made available to young people. In Colorado, where marijuana is legal, there have been cases of elementary school students consuming brownies containing marijuana and showing up high at school, as a result of how accessible the drug is in their homes. We are now beginning to see that happen in Canada. People have a misconception that marijuana is already legal.

Unfortunately, it gets worse. In Oshawa last month, on two different occasions, marijuana snacks were brought into schools in the form of gummy bears and cookies. The government refuses to think of our children. This is wrong. Unfortunately, the Liberals continue to put their political agenda above the safety of Canadians and are failing to consider the consequences. Worst of all, our police force is underfunded, unequipped, and not properly trained to react to an influx of drugs into our communities.

When it comes to health and safety, Canadians deserve the best. If we look at the example of Colorado again, Colorado is already regretting its decision to legalize marijuana. Just last month, we heard the Colorado governor say that he would not rule out banning marijuana once again. We should not make the same mistake as Colorado.

Government Orders

Many Canadians are deeply worried. The constituents in Markham—Unionville have told me countless times how concerned they are about the consequences of allowing marijuana to flow freely into our communities.

I will remain on the right side of this issue. The legalization of marijuana is a serious matter. I do not understand why the government refuses to look at all the facts. It has an arbitrary deadline in mind and is continuing full steam ahead. The Liberal government's plan to legalize marijuana would make Canada the first developed country in the world to do so. That fact alone should make us pause.

Why are we signing up to be the largest social experiment of the 21st century, when all the experts are telling us to slow down? I would have hoped that instead of politicizing the issue, the Prime Minister would take into consideration the many concerns presented by health experts, first responders, community leaders, and residents. Instead, the Prime Minister has opted to use everything at his disposal to rush Bill C-45 into law.

The evidence is clear. Marijuana contains over 400 chemicals. Many of these are the same harmful chemicals found in tobacco smoke and cause serious harm to youth brain development. There is no doubt about it: Marijuana is not safe. The misguided idea pushed by the Liberals that recreational use of this drug is harmless and should be legalized reinforces a misconception that marijuana is harmless. It would result in the normalization of marijuana use, for which our young people will pay dearly.

• (1340)

Countless medical professionals have testified that the brain continues to develop until the age of 25. According to the Canadian Medical Association, increased use of marijuana before the age of 25 increases one's risk of developing mental disorders such as schizophrenia, depression, and anxiety by up to 30%, compared to those who have not used marijuana under the age of 25.

The government cannot go through with this bill.

I have heard loud and clear from my riding that people are concerned about the negative consequences that legalizing marijuana would have on our community and our youth. They are worried about what it would do to the value of their homes. However, the Liberals just keep going.

This is a piece of legislation that pertains to an issue very close to me. Marijuana is a dangerous drug. With all the pro-marijuana publicity lately, it can be hard for many Canadians to remember that marijuana is indeed damaging and addictive.

Canadian families expect safe and healthy communities in which to raise their children. Elected representatives can and should provide guidance on this drug to reflect the views of all Canadians. Let us all remember that we are talking about the health and safety of Canadians, and they deserve better. Let us not rush through the legislation. We need to do what is right for all Canadians. The provinces, municipalities, and police forces are not ready to implement this legislation.

I have said many times before that I oppose the legislation entirely. I choose to listen to the concerns raised by scientists,

doctors, and law enforcement officials. I want to advocate for the voices that are not heard in the legislation and for those who say that the government's plan is being rushed through without proper planning or consideration of the negative consequences of such complicated legislation. The passing of Bill C-45 would lead to negative repercussions at the global level.

The government claims that the legislation will control the drug, but in reality it would allow the drug to get out of control, especially when we look at the issue of home grow. I really just cannot believe it. If marijuana is in the home, youth will have access to it. We have already seen this happen. Why will the government not look at the bill for what it really is, a big mistake? We cannot normalize this drug. We should not legalize it. Our children will pay the price.

I was speaking to the police chief of York region. He is definitely against this. He asked me to ask the member of Parliament for Scarborough Southwest what side he was on for the 40 years he was in law enforcement, compared to now.

There is no money. For York region alone, it will cost \$54 million over three years. The previous Liberal provincial government had promised up to 60%, and 40% will be taken by the local residents of York region. Is that fair?

Mr. Bill Blair (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity to respond to the question put to me by my friend from Markham—Unionville. I was on the side of protecting our kids. I was on the side of public safety. I was on the side of fighting organized crime for 40 years, and I still am.

I would like to correct a couple of things. Perhaps the member opposite is simply not aware. He said that the police are underfunded for this. That is simply, patently false and incorrect. I am sure the member would be reassured by the knowledge that our government has committed \$274 million to fund the police. For the first time, that includes receiving training and access to technology.

He made reference to the York Regional Police. In recognition of municipal police services, we made \$81 million available for the training and equipping of municipal police services. That will be done through the provinces, so perhaps he could direct his concerns to the new provincial government in Ontario.

Finally, we also gave up one half of the federal excise tax, in a 75-25 split, so the provinces would have more money to supply municipalities to address their costs. Therefore, the member's remarks are perhaps not adequately informed about the facts of the funding that is available to law enforcement. I take it as well—

• (1345)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Unfortunately, I have to allow for other questions.

The hon. member for Markham—Unionville.

Government Orders

Mr. Bob Saroya: Madam Speaker, from what I understand, the total share of this \$80 million or \$90 million is only \$300,000 over three years. If we divide it, 80% of the money goes toward federal forces, for training of the RCMP and other agencies, and only 20% goes toward this, as I am told. Therefore, the total share is \$300,000 over three years. However, the cost to implement this federal bill is \$54 million. There is a \$21.6-million shortfall, which will be taken up by local residents, such as those of York region. In many cases, their taxes are up in the 54% tax bracket.

There are many other issues, such as enforcement in relation to homegrown plants. Police officers can hardly do the work they have been hired for at this moment. Will they be expected to go door to door to check the number of plants?

I also learned from the police chief that the conviction rate is only 40% because judges are throwing the cases out. The residents say that these four, six, or 10 plants are ready, and the others will be available in one week. There are seeds and plants, and 10 different crops coming up in their homes.

Mr. Sean Fraser (Central Nova, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member opposite for his thoughtful deliberation on this file. However, I patently disagree with him on a number of issues he raised.

He suggested that this bill would lead to the situation getting out of control and that it would hurt our youth. Those things are happening right now. They are not happening just in Canada; they are happening as much in Canada as anywhere else in the world where countries are tracking statistics on the rate of cannabis consumption by young people.

Why is the member opposite so committed to the status quo, when it has failed our youth and has diverted profits to criminal organizations? Why would we defend a system that has proven to be a failure?

Mr. Bob Saroya: Madam Speaker, why legalize it? Why not decriminalize it? I agree that this is a big issue, and now the government will make it worse by making marijuana available at every street corner. Only 150 stores are proposed nationwide for the first, second, and third year. People think that it has already been legalized. This bill would make the situation worse. There would be more crimes committed. The police do not have the equipment, the training, or the money to enforce it. How are the police going to enforce this?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, a good way to start off is to comment on a question from across the floor, which was something like why legalize instead of just decriminalizing it.

With respect to decriminalization of cannabis, there are two entities I am aware of that support it. One would be the Conservative Party of Canada. The other would be the many different criminal elements in society, because it is the criminal element that would benefit the most if all we did was decriminalize cannabis. Let us think about it. As opposed to having a criminal charge, one would get a fine. That is what the Conservative Party would like to happen. I know that the gangs in the north end of Winnipeg would love to have a policy of that nature.

Through legalization, we are saying that we want to have a real, tangible impact on two things in particular which, for me, are the highest priorities. One is the use of cannabis by young people in our society today. This legislation would go much farther than anything we have ever seen in this House in the last 20-plus years in terms of taking a more responsible approach. I suggest that we would actually have fewer young people engaged in cannabis as a direct result of this legislation. I will give a specific example.

The other thing we are going to see is a lot of disappointed individuals who use cannabis as an illegal way to acquire great sums of money. We are talking about criminal activities that generate hundreds of millions of dollars every year through selling cannabis to youth in every region of our country. People should put themselves in the position of a young 14-year-old or 15-year-old attending a school anywhere in our country who is told that he or she can make money by taking a bag of marijuana and selling it to their friends or siblings.

There is a lot of peer pressure for young people, and the motivation is often to go out and generate pocket money. Ultimately this goes back to the gang activities we often see in our communities. That is what is actually happening today in our high schools and elementary schools. There are individuals who, through criminal activities, are being motivated to get young people more engaged. As a per capita percentage, we have more young people engaged in cannabis than any other country in the western world. There is so much we could be doing to have a real positive impact.

I am very pleased with the amount of consultation that has taken place. One member of the Conservative Party said that very few people know about it and the member is concerned about the school boards and so forth. I would suggest there are very few issues which have generated the type of attention this one has. In fact, it was a major platform issue for the Liberal Party of Canada going into the last federal election. It has been covered by many different media outlets. People make reference to social media. It has been included in householders across the country.

I would find it very difficult to believe that there is any elected official let alone members of the general public in Canada who are not aware of it. People are very much attune to and aware of what is taking place in anticipation of cannabis being legalized. I do not share the concerns the Conservatives have that people are not aware or that there is just not enough attention being given to the issue.

• (1350)

Whether it is the bureaucrats at the health or public safety departments, or the ministers in particular, I must point out that in my many years of being a parliamentarian, never have I seen an individual lead the process on legislation, and be as open and transparent as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and to the Minister of Health. The parliamentary secretary has done an outstanding job.

I want to commend members in both the House and the Senate, as well as all the other stakeholders for the outreach and information flow to ensure that this legislation is being done in the right way.

• (1355)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The question is on the motion.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, May 29, the recorded division stands deferred until later this day at the expiry of the time provided for oral questions.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

YOUTH ACTION NOW

Mr. Erin Weir (Regina—Lewvan, CCF): Madam Speaker, we were saddened last week to learn that Paul Dewar, the former MP for Ottawa Centre, has terminal cancer.

I met Paul in 2005, shortly after coming to Ottawa to work in the public service. He was a first-time NDP candidate fighting to hold Ottawa Centre after Ed Broadbent retired. I volunteered on the campaign and saw Paul's kindness, generosity, and effectiveness. We were proud to have helped elect him and even prouder of his work as an MP. Paul was a champion for the local community he represented, but also took a much broader view, including a global perspective as foreign affairs critic.

Paul gave real meaning to the expression "think globally, act locally" and is doing so again by organizing Youth Action Now to promote grassroots change driven by young people. Please support this initiative by attending the launch at 5:00 p.m. tomorrow at the National Arts Centre.

Statements by Members

WORKPLACE SAFETY

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (North Vancouver, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the collapse of the Ironworkers Memorial Bridge connecting the north shore of Vancouver with the city of Vancouver.

On June 17, 1958, a temporary arm holding the fifth span of the bridge collapsed, sending 79 bridge workers into the Burrard Inlet. Nineteen lost their lives in the accident and 20 more were hospitalized with injuries. This was, and remains, one of the worst industrial accidents in British Columbia's history.

Yesterday, Ironworkers Local 97 hosted a memorial at the bridge. In remembering this tragedy, we must also remember all other Canadians across the country who have been injured or killed on the job. We must honour their memory by rededicating ourselves to ensuring that we learn from these tragedies and work to ensure the safety of all work sites going forward.

* * *

• (1400)

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this summer Simcoe—Grey promises to be full of activities.

Graduation ceremonies start this week at the high schools in my riding. I am proud to provide one student at each school a scholarship in my name for civic involvement.

On June 23, I will be hosting round tables to reintroduce the children's fitness tax credit, which was shamefully cut by the Liberals in their last budget, as well as revisions to the Canada Health Act that will make the government more accountable to patients and take the politics out of health care.

On July 1, I look forward to celebrating Canada Day with local leaders like Pam Irwin, Charlie Tatham, deputy warden Terry Dowdall, and Jim Wilson, our MPP.

The July Elvis festival in Collingwood draws people from all over the world, and our 45th Annual Alliston Potato Festival is one that I will share with great volunteers like Ken Burns.

Add farmers markets, beach days, and cottage life to all of the above and I can tell members that life in Simcoe—Grey over the summer is going to be outstanding.

I hope that everyone here will enjoy a fabulous summer season.

* * *

FATHER'S DAY

Ms. Filomena Tassi (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud and honoured to stand today and recognize my Italian heritage and my father. Both have contributed enormously to the woman who I am today.

Growing up in an Italian household taught me the true sense of the words "love" and "hospitality". Family is integral to the Italian culture, where love for children, grandchildren, and all family members is second to none. I am immensely proud of our Italian Canadian community and its incredible contributions to Canada.

Statements by Members

It is in this spirit and following this Father's Day weekend that I also recognize my amazing father. Words cannot describe the effect his life, his love, and his support have had on me.

I wish to take this opportunity to wish all dads a happy Father's Day. The impact fathers have on their children and grandchildren lasts for generations.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today my heart is with the Tla-o-qui-aht people and especially the families of three young men lost at sea off the west coast of Vancouver Island on Friday. Two other lives were saved, thanks to local citizens.

Dozens of private boats, marine tour operators, crews from across Vancouver Island, including Victoria, Nanaimo, Arrowsmith, Comox Valley, and Port Alberni, assisted local search and rescue, and so many others joined the search. As coastal people, we respond in times like this with compassion and sacrifice. Gas money is raised, food is carried to the dock, local leaders give comfort to the community, and we pull together.

I ask members to please join me in thanking the first responders and residents of Tofino, Ahousaht, and Hesquiaht for standing with the Tla-o-qui-aht people in this time of need. I also ask members to send their prayers and love to the families of the missing and to the many still on the water searching for loved ones.

[Translation]

SCARBOROUGH NORTH

Mr. Shaun Chen (Scarborough North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last year, the people of Scarborough North celebrated not only Canada's 150th anniversary, but also the 40th anniversary of Woodside Square.

[English]

Opened in 1977, the mall has grown to over 90 retailers and service providers offering outstanding products and customer service. More than just a mall, Woodside is a community hub. For local seniors gathered in the morning, the shopping centre provides community tai chi classes that benefit the mind, body, and spirit. For children and youth, various shows and activities are organized throughout the year to help keep young minds engaged in positive ways. For non-profits like the Centre for Immigrant and Community Services, mall patrons have generously donated thousands of dollars for a worthy cause.

This June 30, I invite constituents to join me at Woodside Square for my annual Canada Day weekend barbecue. Today, however, I congratulate Woodside Square on an amazing 40 years and wish it many more years of success.

2013 CALGARY FLOOD

Mr. Ron Liepert (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend marked the fifth anniversary of the largest natural

disaster in the city of Calgary's history. It was the great flood of 2013. Contrary to what the Minister of Environment and Climate Change continues to try to tell us, this flood was not caused by climate change. It was caused by a heavy late-spring rainfall that melted a large snow pack in the mountains.

This flood caused billions of dollars of damage, but it also resulted in thousands of Calgarians helping neighbours in the clean-up. As a result, Calgary, on the second weekend of June, always celebrates neighbour day. That happened this past Saturday, where communities held barbecues and neighbours held block parties.

I would ask Canadians to consider, in cities and communities across the country, emulating what Calgary has done because we never know when we will need our neighbours' help.

● (1405)

SUPPLY MANAGEMENT

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, dairy farming and supply management are important to the economy in my riding of Cumberland—Colchester in Nova Scotia. I have seen the benefits of supply management first-hand, not just for rural Canadians but for all Canadians. Consumers across the country enjoy top-quality dairy because of the very high standards placed on our producers.

Lately, dairy families have raised concerns regarding the future of Canada's supply management system in a renegotiated NAFTA treaty. It is important that supply management is protected in order to preserve the livelihoods of rural Nova Scotians and in fact all rural Canadians.

I want to assure the farmers of Cumberland—Colchester that I stand behind supply management 100%, and I am proud to be part of a government that is fighting every day to support our dairy farmers and our supply management system. I want to thank the very distinguished Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food for his tireless commitment to supply management.

[Translation]

SICKLE CELL DISEASE

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is World Sickle Cell Day. Also known as sickle cell anemia, this is the most common genetic blood disorder in the world.

Every year around the world, over 300,000 children are born with this disease. It causes severe intermittent pain crises throughout the sufferer's life. Sickle cell disease is incurable, but adequate medical care can prevent the symptoms.

I commend the medical community, sickle cell associations, and individuals, such as Wilson Sanon, who help parents and children like Megan St-Cloud of Quebec City for their worthy contributions to fighting this disease.

I invite all members of the House to support the fight against sickle cell disease.

BLOOD DONATION

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am always honoured to talk about extraordinary people from my riding, Mégantic—L'Érable, but today I want to acknowledge the municipality of Plessisville.

Not only do we boast the biggest Relay for Life, but Plessisville has also set the record for the most successful blood drive, thanks to the students of Polyvalente La Samare.

On April 30, 1,091 people answered the call and donated blood. The response was so awesome that Héma-Québec could not even accommodate all the donors. The blood drive was applauded internationally at a special ceremony in Dallas, Texas, on May 11.

Hats off to the 56 students on the committee who were inspired by the story of the event's honorary chair, Serge-André Tardif.

Hats off to François Gagnon and Nathalie Fillion, the main organizers and champions of the blood drive.

Hats off to all the volunteers. Thank you for being with us in Ottawa today. Thank you to all the donors.

On behalf of all my colleagues in the House of Commons and all Canadians for whom giving blood means giving life, I want to congratulate and extend heartfelt thanks to the organizers of the Polyvalente La Samare blood drive.

ALL COMMUNITY GAMES

Ms. Mary Ng (Markham—Thornhill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I recently had the honour of attending the opening ceremonies of the All Community Games.

[English]

Led by Alan Cui, a 13-year-old boy, I sang *This Land is Your Land* among a course of young voices at the Bill Crothers Secondary School to mark the opening of the All Community Games.

What an incredible personification of Canada. Regardless of the languages we speak, the cultures we are part of, or the faiths that we practice, in that song and throughout the games, everyone was unified in calling this land home. That is why our government has invested in levelling the playing field so women and girls, children, youth, and adults with intellectual disabilities and people in indigenous communities can participate fully in sport.

The All Community Games, a multicultural celebration of athletics and sport, have been led by the passion of chairman Joseph Fong for the last 14 years.

I was honoured to be a part of that day.

Statements by Members

EDSON MOSQUE

Mr. Randy Boissonnault (Edmonton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Albertans and all Canadians are standing in solidarity today with members of the Muslim community following a cowardly and appalling act of arson against the Edson mosque. An attack on any place of worship is an attack on the entire faith community. For this attack to come so quickly after the end of the holy month of Ramadan makes it all the more heinous.

I know I speak for the House when I express my gratitude to first responders whose swift actions extinguished the fire quickly.

●(1410)

[Translation]

Our country is stronger because of its diversity, and members of all communities and all faiths must feel safe and be safe in Canada.

[English]

The Muslim community, and everyone who may be shaken or frightened in light of this attack, should know that the government stands with them, their neighbours stand with them, and all Canadians who believe in the strength of our diversity stand with them today and every day.

[Translation]

Shukran.

[English]

JUSTICE

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every morning, families across Canada wake up not knowing where the remains of their loved ones are hidden. Convicted killers who conceal the remains of their victims so the families cannot have closure are committing a despicable crime.

One such family, the McCann family, has been waiting nearly eight years for answers, and it is not alone. The family wants to know where convicted killer Travis Vader hid the bodies of its parents. Mr. Vader will be eligible for parole in just a few years, without ever having to give a clue as to where he hid the remains of his victims.

Families deserve better, and that is why I am working on legislation to ensure that those who refuse to reveal the location of their victims' remains pay the penalty. I hope all parliamentarians will support the legislation to ensure that the families of victims of homicide receive the justice and closure they rightly deserve.

[Translation]

AREO-FIRE

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I recently had the opportunity to visit the premises of Areo-Fire, a company in Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne that specializes in fire protection equipment and services.

Oral Questions

During my visit, I saw a demonstration of the T-Rex 115-foot aerial articulating platform, which was just delivered to Canadian Forces Base Bagotville.

It is one of 11 aerial fire trucks that the Department of National Defence has ordered from the Longueuil company. Five vehicles have already been delivered to bases and units across Canada, from Greenwood in Nova Scotia to Comox in British Columbia.

I would like to congratulate Aero-Fire for winning this \$21 million dollar contract, and I thank them for keeping our soldiers safe.

[English]

UNITED WAYS OF SASKATOON AND AREA AND REGINA

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last week, the United Ways of Saskatoon and Area and Regina launched the province-wide 211 phone, chat, and text line, connecting everyone in Saskatchewan to over 5,000 helping services. With a truly province-wide connection, everyone in the province can pick up the phone to connect with the help they are searching for when dealing with life's challenges. The 211 service connects people with professionals ready to help 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, in over 100 languages, including 17 indigenous languages.

Despite best intentions of governments and community, finding the service that helps is a daunting task. When individuals and families find services quickly and easily, they are better equipped to meet life's challenges, families and individuals feel connected, and our entire community prospers.

I ask all members of the House to join me in congratulating the United Ways of Saskatoon and Area and Regina on launching the 211 phone line, helping citizens of Saskatchewan access help when they need it.

EDSON MOSQUE

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was shocked to hear that someone had tried to start a fire outside of the mosque in my hometown of Edson. The mosque is a centre in our community for a large number of Muslim residents and is utilized by those travelling through the area. I have been there and have attended prayer sessions at the facility. We have had a mosque in Edson since 2003.

Edson is an inclusive community and we have many different religious and cultural organizations and have always intermingled and respected each other. Religious beliefs and freedoms must be respected, and as Canadians we will not tolerate any group or individual who attacks the rights of religious groups in our communities.

The Muslim community in Edson is a strong part of the cultural and economic fabric of our town. This action is not acceptable no matter where in our nation.

•(1415)

GUN AND GANG VIOLENCE

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, gun and gang violence has plagued the streets of Surrey and Lower Mainland. Most recently, it hit the community hard with the deaths of two teenagers, Jason Jhutti and Jesse Bhangal, who were killed in a brutal targeted hit.

This tragic incident brought thousands of parents, youth, and community leaders together and erupted into a "Wake Up Surrey" rally against gang violence. This community has called for help, called for action, and wants this menace that has plagued its streets for far too long to end.

We live in a country with some of the best minds, lawmakers, and law enforcement personnel available than probably anywhere in the world, and the constituents of Surrey demand they work together to end gun violence on our streets.

It is time for all levels of government, community stakeholders, parents, and police forces to work together to ensure lives are not lost to meaningless violence.

We must do more.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Prime Minister made his MPs vote all night to avoid answering one simple question. He made them vote all night because he did not want to be transparent and give Canadians an answer he already had in his possession.

Since the Prime Minister knows how much his carbon tax is going to cost Canadian families, why does he refuse to tell them?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been very open and transparent with Canadians about our plan, how it would work, and how it would protect the environment and create economic growth at the same time. The details are available on our websites. Our experts have done the math, and we are being completely open with our plan showing how we are going to fight climate change. What Canadians do not know is that the Conservatives have no plan on climate change. They refuse to release their action plan for fighting climate change. That is what Canadians do not know.

[English]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the black ink he used to redact his own officials' documents certainly was not transparent. We learned last week, the lengths that this Prime Minister will go to to keep the true costs of the carbon tax from Canadians.

We do know that home heating and gasoline prices will go way up under his scheme. Millionaire Liberals like the Prime Minister might not mind paying higher gas prices, but hard-working Canadian families do. Will the Prime Minister finally come clean and tell Canadians how much his carbon tax will cost them?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite likes to talk about those votes last week, but he does not want to talk about the fact that the Conservatives voted against funding for clean technology and green infrastructure, and they opposed funding for western economic diversification. That is on top of not understanding that the economy and the environment need to go hand in hand.

We have been clear and transparent, and the details are on our websites, in our approach to creating a pan-Canadian approach to fighting climate change. What is unclear is what the Conservatives will do. They have no plan to fight climate change. That is the climate change cover-up.

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a new episode of *The New York Times* podcast "Caliphate" tells of horrific crimes committed by a Canadian named Abu Huzafa. He admits to committing murder on behalf of ISIS. He said that he is becoming more adamant in his ideology, and yet he is still allowed to roam free in Toronto. Meanwhile, the Liberals are taking away the tools our security agencies need to deal with terrorists who return to Canada.

How is that supposed to keep Canadians safe?

• (1420)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Naturally, Mr. Speaker, I have a bit of a hard time hearing that from the Conservatives, who made nearly \$400 million in cuts to the agency that protects our borders, the CFSA, when they had a majority. What is more, on this side of the House, we respect the work of our security agencies; they defend our laws and principles and do whatever it takes to keep Canadians safe. We will not use the work of our police officers to play the politics of fear.

[English]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the government's legislation that is cutting back on the tools that law enforcement agencies have to protect Canadians precisely from people like this terrorist.

This terrorist described a meeting he had with CSIS. He said that they had a picture of him shooting a gun in Syria, and that his face was fully visible. His admissions should meet the threshold to lay a terrorism charge under the Criminal Code.

Oral Questions

Why is the Prime Minister failing to take action to make Canadians safe?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our security agencies take all potential threats very seriously and use the full tool kit of measures, including surveillance, the no-fly list, revoking passports, and laying criminal charges, when sufficient evidence exists.

The expertise of Canadian security and law enforcement professionals is highly respected and sought out around the world. They actively engage in identifying, monitoring, and responding to potential threats. Canadians can have confidence in their work.

Our security services are doing their work, in spite of over \$1 billion in cuts suffered under the Harper government.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the government's own legislation that is taking the tools out of the hands of CSIS and the RCMP.

We are talking about an individual who said, "I am becoming more adamant in my ideology." He said that it is "my own business to deal and overcome the war crimes." This counsellor for Abu Huzafa has given up. He cites that he has become ever more radical in his ideology.

All the while, he is walking free in Canada. Why is the Prime Minister taking away the tools from our law enforcement agencies that keep Canadians safe?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are doing exactly the opposite. We are investing in our security agencies and our security professionals. We are enabling our police officers and national security agents to do their work in a way that Canadians would expect. Unlike the Conservatives, who for years politicized, divided Canadians, and then quietly withdrew funding from the agencies that needed support, we are actually investing in them. We are giving them the tools they need, and we are assuring Canadians that we will not play politics with their safety, that we will instead focus on keeping them safe.

[Translation]

POVERTY

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, according to the most recent report of Campaign 2000, 17.4% of children, or nearly one in five, live in poverty in Canada. That is completely unacceptable, and all the more so, since more children are living in poverty now than when this Parliament voted to eliminate child poverty in 1989.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

That is because 29 years ago, led by Ed Broadbent, Parliament unanimously pledged to end child poverty. However, the facts are the facts: child poverty is getting worse. Ending child poverty is possible. When will the government demonstrate leadership and take this problem seriously?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I share the passion of the member opposite for this issue and will highlight that those Campaign 2000 numbers, which are so alarming, indicate that action needs to be taken. Those Campaign 2000 numbers were from 2015, and that is why we brought in a Canada child benefit immediately after we were elected that is lifting hundreds of thousands of kids out of poverty, a Canada child benefit, by the way, that helps nine out of 10 Canadian families, and that the Conservatives and the NDP voted against. We are going to continue to fight child poverty.

* * *

*[Translation]***IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, over the past six weeks, 2,000 children have been forcibly separated from their parents at the U.S.-Mexico border. The Trump administration's practice is inhumane and forces children to pay the price for internal political conflict. Today, the United Nations condemned the situation and urged Washington to stop this cruel and inhumane practice immediately.

I have one simple question for the Prime Minister. Does he still believe that the United States is a safe third country for asylum seekers?

• (1425)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will not play politics with this issue. This is an extremely difficult situation, and we know just how important it is not to get things confused. The United Nations has determined that the United States is a safe third country for asylum seekers, but at the same time, we need to do more to protect vulnerable migrants around the world. Canada is always ready to contribute, and we will continue to do so.

[English]

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the United States is forcibly separating migrant children from their parents when they enter the U.S. to claim asylum. This cruel and unusual practice is Trump's way of stopping migrants from crossing. The U.S. also announced that it would no longer provide asylum in cases involving domestic and gang violence. These practices are blatant violations of every international law.

Does the Prime Minister still really believe that the United States is a safe country—?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from the beginning, I have been very clear on the role that Canadians expect of me: to stand up firmly and unequivocally for our values, for our interests, to protect Canadians, and make sure we are doing well, as well as having a constructive relationship with the United States. That is what we are going to remain focused on.

You may have noticed, Mr. Speaker, that over the past years, we have been very strong in our advocacy, and not just within Canada, to be welcoming as a country for refugees and asylum seekers, but also to promote that around the world, to encourage other countries to understand that people arriving on our shores are a potential benefit to our communities and our economy.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a news flash for the Prime Minister. The human rights commissioner condemned this policy and calls it unconscionable. This is destroying lives. If Canada does not step up, then we are complicit. Nearly 2,000 children have been sent to mass detention centres, and over 100 of them are under four years old.

Will the Prime Minister stand up for migrant children and suspend the safe third country agreement?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians always stand up for human rights everywhere around the world, and we will continue to. What we will not do is to play politics with this. We understand how important it is to be firm and unequivocal as we protect and support human rights around the world, and we will continue to do that, both by example and by engagement with the world. That is what Canadians expect of this government, and that is what we will continue to do.

* * *

*[Translation]***CARBON PRICING**

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal carbon tax is really not a good idea, but what is worse is the cover-up around it. The Liberal Party is hiding sensitive, important information from Canadians. The Liberals have a document in their possession that says:

...the potential impact of a carbon price on households' consumption expenditures across the income distribution. Key findings are:

It starts well but ends badly, because the findings are all redacted. Not one word can be read. The Liberal government knows the truth, but it is hiding it.

Why is the government not being straight with Canadians about the Liberal carbon tax?

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, climate change and its effects on Canadians should not be a partisan issue. Unfortunately, whenever climate change comes up, the Conservatives continue to show that they are all talk and no action.

Last week, they voted against more than \$1 million in investment to support our parks and protected areas. Partisanship cannot hide the truth: the Conservatives have never had a serious plan.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always funny to hear someone read out French expressions he does not understand, like calling the Conservatives all talk and no action. Let me tell you something—

The Speaker: Order. I would advise the hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent to choose his words carefully. I hope he did not mean to denigrate anyone's proficiency in either language.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I misspoke. Everyone knows full well that I am very respectful of people who speak both languages, but they still need to know what they are talking about.

The parliamentary secretary made reference to the fact that the Conservatives were all talk and no action. However, as a government we achieved results and managed to lower greenhouse gas emissions by 2.2%, without the Liberal carbon tax. The government also knows how much the Liberal carbon tax is going to cost.

Why is the government hiding information from Canadians in English and in French?

• (1430)

The Speaker: In English or in French, the hon. member has to direct his comments to the Chair.

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we understand very well that climate change is a major issue. We are working very hard to address and combat climate change.

[English]

We have developed, with the provinces and territories, a comprehensive plan to address climate change that includes a range of regulatory measures, a price on carbon pollution, and investments in infrastructure. We are addressing climate change in a way that will strengthen the Canadian economy and ensure an appropriate and thoughtful future for our Canadian children.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my question is about the carbon tax cover-up. The Prime Minister said the carbon tax would buy a mythical social licence to build new pipelines. However, not one inch of new pipeline has been built under the Liberals. They have killed three viable privately funded pipelines and forced taxpayers to pay for their failures. Other major oil and gas countries and competitors are not self-imposing harmful carbon taxes. The Liberals will not even say how much their carbon tax will cost Canadians and their families. When will the Prime Minister finally come clean and end the carbon tax cover-up?

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that climate change is real. They expect us to take strong action, and that is exactly what we are doing. The Conservatives would rather keep the House up all night playing politics instead of working for Canadians. They voted against millions of dollars in funding to protect the environment and invest in our future, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions, showing national leadership on climate change, and transitioning to a low-carbon innovative economy. Canadians know that the environment and the economy go together in the modern world. Canadians deserve better than what the Conservatives are offering, and better is exactly what we plan to give them.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): What is even worse, Mr. Speaker, is that the carbon tax will hurt middle-class Canadians. It will disproportionately harm people on low incomes and the working poor and Canadians on fixed incomes. It unfairly targets

Oral Questions

provinces that most directly rely on agriculture and on energy. The Liberals actually do know how much it will cost Canadians and the disastrous impacts that will cascade through the whole economy, but they are doing everything in their power to cover it all up.

When will the Liberals come clean, end the carbon tax cover-up, and tell Canadians how much the Liberal carbon tax will cost them?

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, climate change and its impact upon Canadians should not be a partisan issue. Unfortunately, the Conservatives continue to demonstrate that when it comes to the environment, they are happy to put politics ahead of the interests of Canadians.

Last week they opposed critical funding for the low carbon economy fund, the pan-Canadian framework, the freshwater action plan, and the federal contaminated sites action plan. Making climate change a partisan issue cannot hide the fact that the Conservatives have no plan to address this critical, fundamental issue.

Our government is taking strong action to address climate change and grow the economy in a thoughtful way.

• (1435)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my question is also on the carbon tax cover-up.

The day after the Liberals were elected, Finance Canada produced this document, saying, about the carbon tax cost, "These...costs would then cascade through the economy in the form of higher prices, thus leading all firms and consumers to pay more for goods and services". The memo focuses on the potential impact of the carbon price on households' consumption expenditures across the income distribution. Key findings are blacked out.

Will the government end the carbon tax cover-up and tell us what is in this document?

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Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is investing in opportunities for middle-class Canadians. We have a climate plan that will grow the economy and address the issues around greenhouse gas emissions. That is what Canadians elected us to do, and our plan is working. Carbon pollution is dropping, and our economy is growing. Since forming government, we have created 60% more jobs than the Conservatives did in the same time in office.

The Conservatives are stuck in the past. Last Friday, they voted against providing money for the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency delivering high-quality environmental assessments for major projects.

Unlike the Conservatives, who are quick to criticize, as they have no solutions of their own, we are working on green solutions that will enhance the Canadian economy.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one solution would be to end the carbon tax cover-up and tell Canadians what this tax would cost.

The Liberals can support the carbon tax all they want, but they should also tell Canadians what it will cost to pay that tax. If it is worth it, then what are they so afraid of? The reality is that they are trying to cover up the cost, and eventually they will produce some phoney estimate in order to try to deceive Canadians into believing that the costs are not as high as they, in fact, are. We know that. They stood on their feet for 12 hours trying to protect this cover-up.

Why do they not end it today and tell Canadians what this tax will cost them?

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians understand that climate change is real and that the government and all Canadians need to take strong action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, in concert with our international partners.

We have developed a plan with the provinces and territories called the pan-Canadian framework. I invite my hon. colleague to read it. It is a plan that will not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enable us to meet our international commitments but will allow us to grow the economy in ways that will ensure that going forward, we will have a great low-carbon economy in the future.

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, thousands of workers across the country are living in uncertainty, and things are not improving. After aluminum and steel, now the United States is threatening to impose up to 25% tariffs on the automotive sector.

A Bank of Nova Scotia analysis warns how harmful this would be to our overall economy. The government must act now. Those employees and businesses deserve to be supported through concrete action.

When will the government introduce its plan to protect our workers?

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government understands the importance of the auto sector. That is why we have a plan, which is working well.

[English]

That is why in our plan, we have made significant investments in key automotive plants and in automotive parts companies right across the country, particularly in Ontario.

We will continue to defend auto workers. We will continue to defend and support the auto industry. This is a priority for our government. We will continue to make sure we create growth and jobs in this very important sector.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, going from crisis to crisis is not a plan. It is not a strategy. It needs to be tabled right here in the House of Commons.

The auto industry is concerned about what is happening right now, but the boating industry is bracing itself, because it is next. It is stuck in the crosshairs of escalating retaliation tactics being considered. Small businesses across Canada in the boating industry are feeling the heat, with rising prices and cancelled orders, not to mention the crippling impacts on jobs and tourism.

Now the minister has decided to make the boating industry a trade pawn and expendable. What specifically is the government going to do for the boating industry, tourism, and the jobs those people—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the House knows, and in a measure that was supported by unanimous consent by the House, our government has announced strong measures and reciprocal actions from Canada to defend Canadian steel and aluminum workers. We have announced a consultation period so that all Canadian industries, very much including the boating sector, very much including small business, can share with us their views on the retaliation list.

Let me just say to all Canadians, our government is prepared to respond.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Nadia Murad, a Yazidi survivor of sexual slavery, said:

I dream about one day bringing all the militants to justice, not just the leaders...but all the guards and slave owners, every man who pulled a trigger and pushed my brothers' bodies into their mass grave, every fighter who tried to brainwash young boys into hating their mothers for being Yazidi.

Nadia is currently trying to have her case heard at the International Criminal Court but cannot do so without the approval of the UN Security Council. Will the Prime Minister petition the Security Council to ensure that Nadia and her people get justice?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I, like all members of the House, am absolutely outraged by the horrendous crimes and atrocities perpetrated against minorities in Iraq and Syria. We have been clear. The persecution of the Yazidis in Iraq and Syria is genocide. We condemn the atrocities perpetrated by Daesh, and we have co-sponsored a UN Security Council resolution to establish a mechanism to investigate violations of international law by Daesh, including genocide, to ensure accountability.

• (1440)

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): That is no.

Mr. Speaker, Abu Huzaifa is one of the ISIS terrorists Nadia spoke of to bring justice to. The world owes it to her to bring every ISIS terrorist to justice for their crimes.

The International Criminal Court can prosecute citizens of parties to the Rome statute. Canada is a party, and Abu Huzaifa is Canadian. Will the Prime Minister hand Canadian ISIS terrorists over to the International Criminal Court for prosecution?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate. Canada is there, and Canada is acting. We are leading to protect action in Iraq and Syria. We have co-sponsored a UN Security Council resolution to establish an investigation mechanism. Accountability is absolutely essential, and that is something Canada is pursuing, and we are resettling the victims of Daesh in Canada.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we will take that as a no.

Terrorist Abu Huzaifa is doing quite well. He quite likes his home in Toronto, because it allows him to stay in touch with his ISIS buddies. In Ontario, he does not think he will have to answer for the murders he committed, and here in Canada, he can lie to the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service and blame the west for the murders he committed. However, the *New York Times* managed to get evidence of his crimes straight from his own mouth.

Why does the Prime Minister not have the courage to bring this murderer to justice?

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's police and security services use all the tools at their disposal to investigate all sorts of terrorist activity to keep Canadians safe and to make sure that justice is served. Obviously, there is a challenge in collecting intelligence and having that converted into usable evidence in court, but our police agencies are assiduous in following every lead to make sure that they can charge and prosecute in every possible case.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is the problem. Abu Huzaifa has admitted

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that he committed atrocities, but he is currently walking free on the streets of Toronto as though he were a respectable citizen.

The Prime Minister is telling us that Canadians should not worry, but that is misleading because the Liberals' Bill C-59 will make it much more difficult for law enforcement to arrest these criminals. The Prime Minister also believes that these murderers can be a powerful voice for our country.

Can the Prime Minister tell us whether this murderer will soon be arrested or whether he intends to give him a contract to be a powerful voice for Canadians?

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the appropriate evidence is collected, it is obviously the police and the department of public prosecutions that makes the decision about laying charges and pursuing a case in court. The hon. gentleman would know that prosecutors and police face challenges in being able to do this, because under the previous Conservative government, there were no charges laid against returning terrorists.

* * *

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last week, genetically modified wheat plants were discovered along the side of an Alberta road, even though the cultivation of genetically modified wheat for commercial purposes is not authorized in Canada. The government and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency need to take this situation very seriously. This is a very serious matter.

Japan and South Korea have already announced that they are suspending the sale of Canadian wheat.

As per the NPD's request, will the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food immediately begin holding hearings so that we can get to the bottom of this?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

We support Canadian farmers and we are ensuring that Canada remains a reliable supplier of quality products on international markets.

The government is actively working on this issue and is already collaborating with the industry and our trade partners throughout the world. The discovery of this genetically modified wheat is an isolated incident and does not pose a risk to Canadians or to our trading partners. I will continue to work with our counterparts to keep them informed about the situation.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it was revealed last week that genetically modified wheat, which is unauthorized in Canada, was discovered in Alberta in mid-2017. Japan and South Korea have now suspended imports of Canadian wheat, which represents hundreds of millions of dollars for Canadian farmers.

Concerns have been raised for years about the dangers of GMO contamination, but precautions were never taken. We need answers. Will the Liberals support my call at committee for urgent hearings to ensure that Canadian farmers do not lose further market share?

● (1445)

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can assure my hon. colleague that we support our world-class wheat farmers. We will work with our farmers and be ready to help them with any financial impact it might have. While we remain focused on the Canadian wheat farmers, the Conservatives have voted to take funding away from the Canadian Grain Commission, which is involved in testing processing and is essential in ensuring that our grain continues to be exported. That is shameful.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Picard (Montarville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our dairy industry supports 221,000 Canadian jobs and contributes up to \$20 billion to our GDP. Our government remains strongly committed to supporting our producers and their families.

The Canadian Dairy Commission is vital to the operation of our supply management system. However, the Conservatives shamefully voted against its funding, jeopardizing supply management yet again.

Can the Minister of Agriculture talk about our support for the system?

[English]

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to thank my hon. colleague from Montarville for all his support for the dairy farmers right across the country. It is truly sad that last week, the Conservatives voted to take funding away from the Canadian Dairy Commission, which is essential for the functioning of our dairy supply management system. The Conservative member for Beauce has again renewed his call for the elimination of supply management, calling our dairy farmers nefarious paper millionaires. We have and will continue to support our dairy farmers across this country.

* * *

MARIJUANA

Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my way or the highway.

[Translation]

That is the Liberals' approach. They are violating the jurisdictions of Quebec, Manitoba, and all the provinces. The Liberals could not care less about public safety and our young peoples' health.

[English]

Ottawa knows best.

[Translation]

It is simple. Will the Liberals respect Quebec and Manitoba and allow them to prohibit the cultivation of cannabis in homes, or will they serve up platitudes, as usual, and do what they want?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, protecting the health and safety of Canadians and keeping the profits out of criminals' hands is an absolute priority for our government.

Home cultivation will help displace the illegal market. We are convinced that Canadians will safeguard their cannabis plants and products in the same way they keep their prescription drugs and alcohol safe and secure.

We are also following the advice of the task force and the approach implemented by most American states that have legalized cannabis.

Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is what I was saying. Not only are the Liberals trampling all over Quebec and Manitoba, but they are also telling the Senate and even their own independent senators to take a hike.

However, the provinces are worried that Ottawa will not allow for an approach tailored to provincial priorities. It is not complicated. The Liberals are in a rush to get Canadians smoking.

Why are they making such a mess instead of working with the provinces, putting health and safety before the Liberal ideology?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, protecting Canadians' health and safety is a top priority for our government. The Harper Conservatives' approach did not work. It allowed criminals to benefit and did not manage to keep cannabis out of the hands of our children. We thank the Senate for its work, and we agree with the majority of the amendments they proposed. We believe that Bill C-45 will give us the opportunity to achieve our respective objectives and to transition towards a legal market.

* * *

*[English]***FISHERIES AND OCEANS**

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Fisheries has abandoned lobster fishermen with no evidence that the fishery has contributed to any right whale deaths. The minister has shut it down. He gave them no notice and now the minister is refusing to listen to the fishermen who spend their lives on the water and who have been at the forefront of implementing strategies to protect right whales since 2006.

These fishermen have done everything that has been asked of them and now they stand to lose 25% of their income. When will the minister understand that his "Ottawa knows best" policy is hurting the livelihoods of Atlantic fishermen?

Mr. Terry Beech (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government takes the protection, conservation, and recovery of the North Atlantic right whale extremely seriously. While conservation measures will have the greatest immediate impacts on fisher harvesters and processors, the long-term economic risks of not adequately protecting these whales is even greater.

The Conservatives know this. They would rather play politics on this issue and focus their energy on other priorities like making sure every single member of the Conservative caucus votes against funding the Atlantic fisheries fund, which is exactly what they did last Thursday.

* * *

● (1450)

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Japan and South Korea have now suspended importing of Canadian wheat due to concerns about the GMO wheat that was found by the CFIA. Those two countries combined represent more than \$650 million in market access for our Canadian wheat growers. Has the agriculture minister met with his counterparts in Japan and South Korea and what is his plan to try and regain this vital market access for our Canadian wheat farmers?

I would like to mention, before he politicizes this, that in the new budget the Liberals are cutting \$100 million from food safety at CFIA. How can he ensure that our food is safe for our market access?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to cutting, Canadians saw last week who voted against everything we were presenting to defend Canadians. They know who voted against this. It was the Conservatives.

When it comes to that very serious issue, we obviously stand with Canadian farmers. We understand it is an isolated case. We are talking with our partners and allies around the world. I did call the European Union colleagues, like the minister of agriculture did call our colleagues in Japan and South Korea. We are doing everything we can and we are going to continue to work with our farmers. Farmers know they can trust this side of the House.

* * *

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the year-long failure by the federal government and Omnitrax to get Churchill's railway and port back on track has cost Churchill and our north deeply. Now the Canadian Transportation Agency says the Hudson Bay Railway has the responsibility to fix the line. The federal government recently expressed support for a regional partnership.

Oral Questions

Instead of prioritizing an old pipeline, will the Liberals work to hold Omnitrax to account and invest in a strategic resource in our north and get Churchill's port and rail line back on track as soon as possible?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government remains totally committed to the people of Churchill and northern Manitoba, and we recognize the importance of the rail line for the community. The agency's ruling is consistent with our government's long-held view that the private owner had the obligation to repair the line when it was damaged. Months ago, the private company did not inform us of the start of any necessary repairs to its line and we moved forward with legal action.

* * *

MARINE TRANSPORTATION

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the transport minister has the mandate to improve marine safety, but BC Ferry & Marine Workers' Union says a new ruling of Transport Canada has left engine rooms unattended. This risks passenger safety on the new Salish class ferries. With engineers five decks above critical machinery and steering equipment, this risks collision. Millions ride these ferries. Can this really be true? Do the Liberals actually have weaker staffing rules for passenger ferries than for bulk cargo ships?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as you have heard me say so many times before, security and safety is my number one priority and it applies not only to rail, it also applies to all modes of transport conveyance and that includes ferries. When we make a decision about a regulation, it is after very careful thought and an analysis of the risk management involved and we do not take these things lightly.

* * *

FOREIGN INVESTMENT

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, United States intelligence officials are warning the government that the Chinese telecom giant, Huawei Technologies, is a security threat to the Five Eyes network of Canada's allies. The U.S. is cautioning that Huawei is a grave security risk, and adds that its equipment and devices should not be used by Canada or other western allies. Are the Liberals reviewing Huawei's operations in Canada in light of U.S. intelligence warnings?

Oral Questions

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite knows full well, we have enormous confidence in our security intelligence agencies. They do a thorough job and they make sure they protect our national interests. When it comes to Huawei, the members also have some people who work for them whom they can probably get a better answer from as well. When it comes to national security, intellectual property, and our telecommunications sector, make no mistake: we will always defend Canadians and our sector.

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, security experts are warning that Chinese companies like Huawei are a threat to our Canadian economic prosperity. The U.S. is moving to ban Huawei. Australia has banned it already from the next generation of 5G networks and also from federal broadband there. The United Kingdom has set up a special facility to inspect all Huawei equipment coming into that country. In contrast, our public safety minister has said that Huawei is not a threat. When will the Liberals put Canada's cybersecurity ahead of their political agendas?

● (1455)

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have made it clear on many occasions that while I do not discuss specific cases in the House or with the media, the security and police authorities of this country are charged with the responsibility of taking the steps that are necessary, within the law and the Constitution, to keep Canadians safe and to safeguard the national interests of Canada, and they do that job.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the trans-Pacific partnership is vitally important to creating jobs and growth in Canada. Hundreds of millions more customers would be able to purchase our high-quality Canadian goods and services tariff-free. It just needs to be ratified by the government and we stand ready to support it. Canada cannot afford to be left behind. We need to be among the first to ratify this agreement. Will the Liberals make this agreement a priority, and work to pass it before the House rises for summer?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague knows, it is my priority. That is why we introduced legislation last week to ratify the CPTPP. I appreciate the question because Canadians understand there has never been a better time to diversify. We are going to do just that to open markets and to open opportunities for SMEs across our nation, for communities, and for workers. People understand that we will continue to work hard. They know they can trust us when it comes to international trade.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in my home province of Nova Scotia, nearly 20% of people identify as living with a disability. That is why programs such as Easter Seals Nova Scotia are crucial. In delivering vocational and life skills programs, it plays an important role in ensuring all members of

the community have an equal chance at success. Recently, it had applied for funding to expand its new leaf enterprises program through ACOA. The Conservatives seem to think programs like this, and ACOA overall, should not receive government funding, so they stood to vote against funding the agency last week. Would the minister please share with us what we could have lost due to the actions of the Conservatives?

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour for his advocacy. He clearly highlighted the importance of this investment, which is crucial for good quality services. That is why I am glad to highlight that our government invested \$350,000 in Easter Seals Nova Scotia, funding that was provided through ACOA. Unfortunately, as the member mentioned, the members opposite, particularly the Conservatives, voted against additional funding for ACOA. On this side of the House, we will always defend ACOA, including the 32 MPs, and we will always stand up for Atlantic Canada.

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Harrington Lake official summer residence of Canada's prime ministers is in need of repair, but a few recent improvements might raise eyebrows among the middle class and those, burdened with new taxes, struggling to join it.

The Prime Minister bought a new personal sauna, but taxpayers paid \$4,000 to plug it in. Taxpayers paid an extra \$17,000 to groom cross-country ski trails. A new swing set cost \$7,500. There are new canoes and kayaks. How does the PM justify these particularly personal benefits to taxpayers?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is the responsibility of the National Capital Commission to do the maintenance of all the official residences. That is why the NCC is conducting much needed work at Harrington Lake, in order to conserve this heritage building.

The Prime Minister has paid for a recent improvement with personal funds. Also, we know that the building and the HVAC system have reached the end of their life cycle. The RCMP is also conducting work to enhance security and the NCC is working with all agencies to improve the maintenance of all official residences.

[Translation]

CHILD CARE

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development announced an increase in the Canada child benefit. This is all well and good, but the government cannot fix poverty by mailing out some cheques. In the finance minister's riding, four out of 10 children live in poverty. A generous benefit helps, yes, but all families also need access to affordable day care.

When will we see affordable day care?

• (1500)

[English]

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in terms of the Canada child benefit in the minister's riding, \$45 million is being sent to families who need that support. The NDP voted against that.

In terms of child care, this government has invested \$7.5 billion over the next 10 years to partner with the provinces, territories, and indigenous governments to deliver that child care.

In terms of housing, the Canada housing benefit, a \$40-billion, 10-year investment to build housing, repair housing, and subsidize housing is all part of our attack against poverty. We just want the NDP to help us get there faster.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the previous Conservative government ignored some of Canada's most vulnerable. Last week, we saw the current Conservatives are no different than the Harper Conservatives when they opposed measures like more money for the Canada child benefit, more money for parents of missing and murdered children, more money for fighting homelessness, and more money for Canada's seniors.

Can the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development tell this House how our government continues to invest in Canadians, despite the Conservative Party's continued opposition?

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore for highlighting exactly why Canadians say that the leader of the opposition is simply Stephen Harper with a smile. He has not just a smile. He has a bit of a smirk when he votes against the Canada child benefit. When he votes against a boost to the GIS and helping seniors, and when he votes against making sure we have child care and housing, he does it with a smile. It worries us.

This government will continue to fight for Canadians and fight to make sure they get the support they need from this government. We will not do it with a smile, the way they do it with a smirk.

Oral Questions

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week Canada refused to vote against a UN resolution that singled out Israel. The resolution had no mention of the inciting role Hamas played in the Gaza riots.

Could the Prime Minister please inform this House of the reasons why he told our UN ambassador to abstain from this vote?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada is a loyal friend to Israel and we believe that resolutions at the UN should accurately reflect the situation on the ground. That is why Canada voted for a U.S. amendment to last week's resolution that would have explicitly referred to the role played by Hamas in the recent violence in Gaza.

Hamas is a terrorist organization and Canada calls on the international community to stand up to Hamas, which must cease its violent activity and provocative actions against Israel.

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, QD): Mr. Speaker, from January to May, over 12,000 asylum seekers entered Quebec. If this keeps up, that number will exceed 25,000 by the end of the year. The Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship and his assistant, the Minister of Transport, made all kinds of promises to the Government of Quebec, but they have been all talk and no action so far.

When will the ministers do something to take the pressure off Quebec on the immigration file once and for all?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as you know, we are working very closely with the Province of Quebec and the Province of Ontario to manage a difficult situation. We are collaborating very well, and we have in fact approved funds for Quebec because of the extra load it is dealing with. Unfortunately, last week the members opposite opposed funding for integration services in Quebec. As hard as that is to believe, it is true.

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, QD): Mr. Speaker, excuses and promises, promises and excuses.

The government promised that a triage plan would be in place by April. At the end of May, they said it would happen after the Ontario election. That was two weeks ago, and there is still no plan. Summer and the end of the parliamentary session are approaching, as is the Quebec election, but I do not expect the government to come up with anything other than excuses.

When exactly will the government implement a working triage plan?

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government is determined to ensure orderly migration.

*Government Orders**[English]*

We have invested over \$173 million for further processing at the border, as well as for faster processing of refugee claims. In addition to that, we have given an initial installment of assistance to Quebec, Ontario, and Manitoba to recognize the pressures they face with respect to temporary housing.

We will continue to work with the provinces, including with the Province of Quebec, in the intergovernmental task force on irregular migration. Our outreach efforts are ongoing. We are proud of our record, and we will continue that collaboration.

* * *

● (1505)

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Hunter Tootoo (Nunavut, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

The Minister of Agriculture indicated recently that farmers had received carbon pricing exemptions for on-farm use of diesel fuel and gasoline, no doubt because the government recognized the undue hardship this would cause.

The minister is aware of Nunavut's negligible carbon footprint and unique circumstances, and has seen first-hand the hardship Nunavummiut face. The Government of Nunavut has requested carbon pricing exemptions for transportation, power generation, and home heating fuel. Will the minister grant these exemptions?

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know very well that northerners are on the front lines of climate change. Canada's Arctic is warming at twice the rate of the global average, with real consequences for people's lives.

The pan-Canadian framework, which was developed in partnership with the provinces and territories, recognizes that climate action will look different in the north. We are committed to working with our partners in the territories to understand and address the unique impacts in the north. This very much includes the incoming premier from Nunavut, a former conservation officer, and minister responsible for the environment.

Our government is also supporting clean growth in the north through investments to move communities away from relying on diesel.

* * *

*[Translation]***PRESENCE IN GALLERY**

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Khemaies Jhinaoui, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tunisia.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, we referred to a government report on the carbon tax eight times throughout question period. I seek the consent of the House to table that report.

The Speaker: Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to table this document?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS*[Translation]***CANNABIS ACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion in relation to the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-45, An Act respecting cannabis and to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Criminal Code and other Acts.

The Speaker: It being 3:08 p.m., pursuant to order made on Tuesday, May 29, 2018, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion relating to Senate amendments to Bill C-45.

● (1515)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 868)***YEAS***Members*

Aldag	Alghabra
Alleslev	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Aubin
Ayoub	Badawey
Bagnell	Bains
Baylis	Beech
Bennett	Benson
Bibeau	Bittle
Blakie	Blair
Blaney (North Island - Powell River)	Boissonnault
Bossio	Boulterice
Boutin Sweet	Bratina
Breton	Brisson
Brosseau	Caesar Chavannes
Cannings	Caron
Casey (Cumberland - Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Chen	Choquette
Christopherson	Cullen
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	Davies
DeCourcy	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Donnelly
Drouin	Dubé
Dubourg	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Duscault	Dzerowicz
Easter	Ehsassi
El Khoury	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Frangiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Freeland	Fuhr
Garneau	Garrison
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Gould
Graham	Grewal
Hardie	Harvey
Hehr	Hogg
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Husson
Hutchings	Iacono
Johns	Jolibois

July
 Jordan
 Kang
 Khara
 Lambropoulos
 Lamoureux
 Lauzon (Argenteuil La Petite-Nation)
 Lehoullier
 Leslie
 Lighthound
 Long
 Ludwig
 MacGregor
 Malcolmson
 Masse (Windsor West)
 Mathysen
 May (Saanich Gulf Islands)
 McDonald
 McKay
 McLeod (Northwest Territories)
 Mendicino
 Miller (Ville Marie Le Sud-Ouest Île des Soeurs)
 Monsef
 Morneau
 Nassif
 Ng
 Oliphant
 O'Regan
 Paradis
 Peterson
 Philpott
 Ponsant
 Qualtrough
 Rafanisi
 Robillard
 Rogers
 Rota
 Ruimy
 Sahota
 Sajjan
 Sangha
 Scarpaleggia
 Schulte
 Sgro
 Sheehan
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 Simms
 Sorbara
 Stewart
 Tan
 Tootoo
 Vandal
 Vaughan
 Weir
 Wilkinson
 Wrzesniewski
 Young 205

Jones
 Jowhari
 Khalid
 Kwan
 Lametti
 Lapointe
 Lavender
 Lefebvre
 Levitt
 Lockhart
 Longfield
 MacAulay (Cardigan)
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)
 Maloney
 Massé (Avignon La Mitis Matane Matapédia)
 May (Cambridge)
 McCrimmon
 McGuire
 McKinnon (Coquitlam Port Coquitlam)
 Mendès
 Mihychuk
 Morrissey
 Nault
 O'Connell
 Oliver
 Ouellette
 Peschisolidi
 Pettipas Taylor
 Picard
 Quach
 Rankin
 Rioux
 Rodriguez
 Romanado
 Ruxid
 Rusnak
 Saini
 Samson
 Sarai
 Schiefke
 Serré
 Shanahan
 Sidhu (Mission Matsqui Fraser Canyon)
 Sikand
 Sohi
 Spengemann
 Tabbara
 Tassi
 Trudeau
 Vandenbeld
 Virani
 Whalen
 Wilson-Raybould
 Yip

NAYS

Members

Aboultailf
 Albrecht
 Anderson
 Barkow
 Benzen
 Berthold
 Block
 Brassard
 Chong
 Cooper
 Diotte
 Dreeshen
 Falk (Battlefords Lloydminster)
 Finley
 Gallant
 Genuis
 Hoback
 Kelly
 Kitchen
 Lake
 Leitch
 Lloyd

Albas
 Allison
 Arnold
 Beaulieu
 Bernier
 Blaney (Bellevue Les Etchemins Lévis)
 Bouchier
 Carrié
 Clement
 Dehell
 Doherty
 Eghinski
 Falk (Provencher)
 Fortin
 Gendreau
 Harder
 Jeneroux
 Kent
 Kusie
 Lauzon (Stornont Dundas South Glengarry)
 Liepert
 Lobb

Routine Proceedings

MacKenzie	Maguire
Marcil	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLeod (Kamloops Thompson Cariboo)	Motz
Nater	Nicholson
O'Toole	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Plamondon
Pollivier	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Saroya	Scheer
Schmale	Shields
Sorenson	Stanton
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Theriault
Tilson	Trost
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vecchio	Viersen
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Wong	Yurdiga 82

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 20 petitions.

* * *

[Translation]

EXTRACTIVE SECTOR CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY COUNSELLOR

Ms. Pam Goldsmith-Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the 2017 annual report to Parliament on the activities of the Office of the Extractive Sector Corporate Social Responsibility Counsellor covering the period from June 2016 to May 2017. The report was prepared by the Extractive Sector Corporate Social Responsibility Counsellor.

* * *

[English]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mr. Scott Simms (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation respecting its participation at the mission to the Republic of Austria, the country that will next hold the rotating presidency of the Council of European Union, and its participation at the second part of the 2018 session of the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe. Both delegations went to Vienna, Austria, and Strasbourg, France, from April 16 to 27, 2018.

Routine Proceedings

● (1520)

Hon. Robert Nault (Kenora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, a report of the Canadian Section of ParlAmericas respecting its participation at the third gathering of the Open Parliament Network, the 45th Board of Directors Meeting of ParlAmericas, and the 8th Summit of the Americas held in Lima, Peru, from April 11 to 13, 2018.

[Translation]

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, two reports from the Canadian delegation of the Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. The first is respecting the meeting of the Expert Committee Meeting on Status (EXCO), held in London, United Kingdom, from March 9 to 12, 2017. The second is respecting the Post-election Seminar (Kenya), held in Mombasa, Kenya, from March 4 to 8, 2018.

[English]

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the following five reports.

The first is the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association respecting its participation in the 95th Rose-Roth Seminar in Kyiv, Ukraine, July 3 to 5, 2017.

[Translation]

I also present the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association respecting its participation at the 63rd annual session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly held in Bucharest, Romania, from October 6 to 9, 2017.

[English]

Next is the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association respecting its participation at the joint visit of the Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council and the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships, in Kyiv and Hostomel, Ukraine, April 4 to 7, 2017.

[Translation]

I also present the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association respecting its participation at the NATO Interparliamentary Council, the Sub-Committee on Transition and Development, and the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships, held in Odessa, Ukraine, March 5 and 6, 2018.

[English]

The last is the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association respecting its participation at the Parliamentary Transatlantic Forum in Washington, United States of America, December 11 to 13, 2017.

Mr. Terry Sheehan (Sault Ste. Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group respect-

ing its participation at the co-chairs' annual visit held in Tokyo and Osaka, Japan, March 14 to 16, 2018.

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, three reports of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group.

The first concerns the 72nd annual meeting of the Council of State Governments' Midwestern Legislative Conference held in Des Moines, Iowa, from July 9 to 12 July 2017.

The second concerns the annual legislative summit of the National Conference of State Legislatures, NCSL, held in Boston, Massachusetts, from August 6 to 9, 2017.

The third concerns the 57th annual meeting and regional policy forum of the Council of State Governments' Eastern Regional Conference held in Uncasville, Connecticut, from August 13 to 16, 2017.

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 11th report of the Standing Committee on Official Languages entitled, "Media in the Digital Age: Reconciling Federal Responsibilities to Official Language Minority Communities with New Trends". This report is very important for people living in official language minority communities in Canada. I thank the committee members. I also want to thank the clerk, Christine Holke, and analyst, Lucie Lecomte. Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

● (1525)

[English]

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Mrs. Deborah Schulte (King—Vaughan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 17th report of the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development, titled "Better Buildings for a Low-Carbon Future".

I wish to thank all the members of the committee and all the witnesses for the hard work in putting this together.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Stephen Fuhr (Kelowna—Lake Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 10th report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, entitled "Canada and NATO: An Alliance Forged in Strength and Reliability".

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to the report. This is a unanimous report.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 22nd report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, entitled "Indigenous People in the Federal Correctional System". This was a unanimous report.

There was a lot of hard work, but it reflects the upset of members with respect to indigenous incarceration. The members wish me to convey that they will be calling the ministers and the officials to the committee in the fall to respond to their recommendations.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

I also have the honour to present two reports of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security in relation to the recently tabled, as amended, Bill C-71, an act to amend certain acts and regulations in relation to firearms.

LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT

Mr. Gagan Sikand (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the second report of the Standing Joint Committee on the Library of Parliament, entitled "Certificate of Nomination of Heather P. Lank to the Position of Parliamentary Librarian".

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-409, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (threat to publish intimate images).

He said: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce my bill to make the threat to publish intimate images without consent a criminal offence. Our Conservative government made the publication of intimate images without consent a criminal offence in December of 2014.

Lives have been ruined through this reprehensible behaviour. We know that some Canadians have taken their own lives as a result. What is missing from this, in my opinion, is the problem with threatening to publish intimate images without consent. Using the threat to publish intimate images of another person as a means of control or coercion over that person is very nearly as heinous as the actual publication. A victim could live in fear of what might happen, again with potentially damaging life consequences.

Australia, the United Kingdom, and many U.S. states have such a statute on the books of their respective jurisdictions, and it is my contention that Canada should as well. Equipping our law enforcement and justice officials with the appropriate tools to handle the digital age in which we live is the responsibility of all members. My hope is that this measure gets the support from all members in the House when it comes up for debate.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

• (1530)

BANKRUPTCY AND INSOLVENCY ACT

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-410, An Act to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act (property of bankrupt — exclusion).

He said: Mr. Speaker, today I have the honour of tabling a bill that I believe will provide necessary clarity and reassurance for the hard-earned savings of Canadians. I would also like to take the time to thank the member for Edmonton Riverbend for seconding the bill and note the tireless work he does on behalf of his constituents.

This bill would enact a simple change. Currently, when a Canadian files for bankruptcy or insolvency, their RRSPs are protected from creditors. However, there are no such protections for registered education savings plans and registered disability savings plans. The bill would amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act to exclude the property in RESPs and RDSPs from a bankruptcy. It seeks to give clarity to those. Savings are not vulnerable accounts. The money Canadians put into these accounts to save for their children's education or for the high costs of caring for a family member with a disability is off limits to creditors.

This bill is in large part a way of remembering the legacy of the late Hon. Jim Flaherty and his efforts to create the RDSP and RESP.

I would also like to thank the MPP-elect for Ottawa West—Nepean, Jeremy Roberts, for his work on preparing the bill.

I hope the bill will be supported by all members of this place. The amount of support and feedback from all colleagues and stakeholders has certainly been a motivation to me to see this become law.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

PETITIONS

ALGOMA PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table petitions from the good riding of Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing, more specifically, people from Wharfedale and Elliot Lake, as well as people from Sault Ste. Marie, Garden River, Prince Township, and Sudbury, who want to have their voices heard in the House of Commons.

The petitioners remain extremely concerned that the Algoma passenger train has yet to be put back into service. They add that continued hardship is being felt by residents, businesses, communities, and other passengers. Their wishes include having the Minister of Transport and his department work with the Missanabie Cree First Nation-led *mask-wa Oo-ta-ban*, which means bear train, to ensure the passenger service can be put back into service. By putting this service back on track, it would also contribute to the reconciliation process, and would help create employment and economic opportunities.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the honour of presenting a petition signed by Canadians from across the country.

Routine Proceedings

The petitioners express great concern about the harvesting and trafficking of human organs and body parts without consent and for profit, as documented by the independent Matas-Kilgour investigations.

In an effort to put a stop to the industry of harvesting and trafficking of human organs and body parts, the petitioners urge Parliament to adopt House Bill C-350 and Senate Bill S-240. These bills continue the work of Bill C-500 and Bill C-381, introduced by myself in 2008 and 2009, and Bill C-561, introduced by Irwin Cotler in 2013.

The petitioners urge Parliament to move quickly on this legislation and end this horrific multi-million dollar industry.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my friend from Etobicoke Centre, and other colleagues, in also tabling a petition in support of Bill C-350 and Bill S-240.

I tabled Bill C-350, and it was seconded by the member for Etobicoke Centre, who had a similar bill in a previous Parliament. These bills deal with the scourge of forced organ harvesting, organs taken from people, often political prisoners, without their consent. These bills would make it a criminal offence for a Canadian to go abroad to get an organ for which there was no consent.

We cannot completely stop this practice, but we can stop Canadians from being complicit in it. The signatories urge Parliament to pass these bills quickly.

• (1535)

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I also rise to present a petition on behalf of Canadians with respect to Bill C-350 to stop the trade in organ harvesting and to stop Canadians travelling abroad to receive organs that have been harvested without consent.

I am very proud to present this petition on behalf of Canadians who are against this horrific practice.

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it may surprise Canadians who travel abroad to acquire human organs that might have been removed from victims without their consent that they face no sanctions in Canada.

I am pleased to rise today to table a petition from dozens of people from western Canada who draw attention to the fact that a private member's bill is now before the House, and another bill is before the Senate, to address this problem.

The petitioners urge Parliament to pass this legislation and to amend two other statutes to prohibit Canadians from travelling abroad to acquire human organs removed without consent.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I also rise today to present a very important petition from Canadians from coast to coast to coast concerned about the issue of organ harvesting, organs taken from victims without their consent.

Two bills are currently before Parliament, one put forward by the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan and one that emanates from the Senate, Bill C-350 and Bill S-240.

The petitioners call on Parliament to pass this legislation quickly so we can protect people in foreign countries from the risks of this extremely devastating thing. It is hard to even imagine organ harvesting without consent.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I have a second petition. This was put together by citizens of Canada. Some people do not recognize that our petition process can accept signatures from those under 18 years of age. This petition comes from Salt Spring Elementary School.

The petitioners ask the government to reconsider spending \$7.4 billion on an expanded pipeline. They specifically advocate that the Government of Canada instead build 2,600 wind turbines, thus creating 268,600 jobs; construct 15,600 acres of solar panels; and fund alternative uses for a transition to a renewable energy economy.

SMALL BUSINESS

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I have the honour of presenting a petition that nearly 45,000 Canadians have signed, calling upon the government to abandon its detrimental changes to the small business tax rate.

A lot of people talk about whether petitions make a difference. This one clearly did. I want to thank the tens of thousands of Canadians who oppose this terrible decision on behalf of the government, and thank them for raising their voices.

CANADA POST

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from Canadians who are support in postal banking.

Nearly two million Canadians desperately need an alternative to payday lenders, those predators who take advantage of the poor, marginalized, rural, and indigenous communities in the country. We have 3,800 Canada Post outlets already in existence across rural Canada that are perfectly able to provide financial assistance with respect to postal banking.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to enact my motion, Motion No. 166, to create a committee to study and propose a plan for postal banking under the corporation of Canada Post.

CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by hundreds of petitioners who call on the Prime Minister to defend the rights of freedom of conscience, through thought and belief, and to withdraw the attestation requirement for applications to the Canada summer jobs program.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Arif Virani (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to present a petition created through the hard work of Amy Stocking and students at St. Cecilia Catholic Elementary School in my riding of Parkdale—High Park.

The petitioners urge us to further support important work surrounding international development and women working for peace. It is a true pleasure to present this duly certified petition by the aspiring young minds at St. Cecilia, who are clearly acting locally and thinking globally.

• (1540)

TRANS MOUNTAIN PIPELINE

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is my last week in the House of Commons, and this will be my last petition that I present on stopping the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

Citizens of Burnaby have signed this petition, immediately calling on the government to prevent this new pipeline from proceeding through British Columbia. They are especially upset about the risks to the environment and our local economy. The signatures really started to pick up after the natural resources minister threatened to use the army on British Columbians to force it through.

I urge the government to pay attention to this and all the other petitions I have presented on this.

IMPAIRED DRIVING

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every day impaired driving causes extreme grief and sadness for many Canadians. Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs all too often ends in a tragic result. We need to stand alongside the victims and ensure they are supported.

On behalf of thousands of Canadians, I table this petition today, calling on the government to make changes to the Criminal Code and to implement mandatory minimum sentencing for those convicted of impaired driving causing death.

PHARMACARE

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table a petition from Albertans, calling on the government to immediately take action to implement universal pharmacare.

More than one in five people are unable to fill their prescriptions and many struggle just to pay for the prescription drugs they need. Canada is the only country in the world with a universal medicare system that does not include prescription drugs.

The petitioners call on the government to stop just studying and actually implement a universal pharmacare program.

LAKE SIMCOE CLEANUP FUND

Hon. Peter Van Loan (York—Simcoe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to table a petition that the House will find to be of compelling interest. It is an e-petition signed by thousands of Canadians asking the Liberal government to reverse its cancellation of the Lake Simcoe cleanup fund.

Routine Proceedings

This fund, which operated for 10 years, brought together community groups and environmental groups from across the Lake Simcoe watershed and funded them to the tune of almost \$60 million to undertake physical remediation projects within the Lake Simcoe watershed. It resulted in tremendous improvements and progress, but much work remains to be done.

The petitioners call on the government to restore the Lake Simcoe cleanup fund and restore the lake's environment for future generations.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present two petitions in the House today.

One hundred and thirty-two million girls do not have access to primary or secondary education. The petitioners, many from my riding, including Barbara Clay and Phyllis Slinger, call on the Government of Canada to invest in girls and women in the world's poorest countries to unlock their full potential by committing to a bold initiative at the G7 summit that enables at least 100 million women to learn, work, and increase their independence.

FALUN GONG

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is on falun gong, which is a spiritual practice.

The petitioners request the Canadian government to condemn the illegal arrest of Canadian citizens for practising falun gong and call on the immediate and unconditional release of Canadian citizen Ms. Qian Sun.

FIREARMS

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a few petitions signed by people across my riding. These constituents are licensed firearms owners and they point out that they are some of Canada's most law-abiding citizens.

The petitioners recognize that Bill C-47 will nothing to keep firearms out of the hands of criminals or terrorists. As such, they call on the House of Commons to oppose Bill C-47.

RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the next petition is signed by hundreds of Canadians from Alberta, BC, and Yukon.

These Canadians are concerned that Canada is the only nation in the world without laws that protect preborn children. They note that Canada's Supreme Court has said it is Parliament's responsibility to enact legislation and protect fetal interests.

The petitioners call on Parliament to speedily enact legislation that would bring Canada's abortion regulations into line with those of other developed nations.

Routine Proceedings

PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the final petition I wish to present is signed by hundreds of Canadians across Canada and many of my own constituents.

The petitioners are concerned about the access ability of violent and degrading sexually explicit material online and the impact on public health, especially the well-being of women and girls. As such, they call on the House of Commons to require meaningful age verification on all adult websites.

ABANDONED VESSELS

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to present a petition today on cleaning up and dealing with abandoned vessels. As an MP who represents coastal communities, this concern is raised frequently. There are signatures from several communities on this petition and I want to recognize the many from the Sointula community, an area I am proud to represent.

The petitioners acknowledge that abandoned vessels pose an environmental and navigational hazard. I think of the Zeballos community that has been dealing with this for a long time. They point out that no regulations or programs have established effective measures for the removal and recycling of abandoned vessels and that coastal communities in Canada have called for the government to act on abandoned vessels for decades.

The petitioners call on the government to finally take some action in this area.

• (1545)

CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition signed by 11,678 petitioners who point out that the current eligibility requirements of employers seeking to apply for Government of Canada funding through the Canada summer jobs program, requiring organizations to sign an attestation, would force many organizations to choose between their beliefs, often rooted in their religion, and being able to receive funding. They say that by its nature, this requirement discriminates against organizations based on their beliefs.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to remove this discriminatory requirement and allow Canadians to continue to express their freedom of religion and belief of expression without facing institutionalized discrimination by the Government of Canada.

DRUG ADDICTION

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to table a petition that was crafted by John and Jennifer Hedican of Courtenay and nurse Shanyn Simcoe. They have drafted this petition on behalf of John and Jennifer's 26-year-old son, Ryan Hedican, who, like thousands of other Canadians, lost his life as a result of the fentanyl crisis.

They are calling on the Government of Canada to declare the current opioid overdose and fentanyl poisoning crisis a national public health emergency under the Emergencies Act in order to manage and resource it, with the aim to reduce and eliminate

preventable deaths. They are also asking that the government reform the current drug policy to decriminalize personal possession. They are asking the government to create with urgency and immediacy a system to provide safe unadulterated access to substances so that people who use substances experimentally, recreationally, or chronically are not at imminent risk of overdose due to a contaminated source.

Finally, they call on the government for real action, because these deaths are occurring in all provinces and to people in all walks of life. It is time the fentanyl crisis be declared a national emergency.

The Deputy Speaker: The time has just about expired for petitions, and I see approximately six or seven members standing. I wonder if a member might ask for unanimous consent of the House to extend the period allowed for petitions for upwards of four minutes.

I see the hon. member for York—Simcoe is on his feet.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent of the House to extend the period of time for petitions sufficient to allow the members the Speaker has identified to present their petitions.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: Presenting petitions, the hon. member for Simcoe—Grey.

CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition to the House and to the Prime Minister of Canada from a number of individuals across the country. They believe that the current Liberal government's proposed attestation requiring the Canada summer jobs program applicants to hold the same views as the government would contravene the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. They are asking the Prime Minister to defend the freedoms of conscience, thought, and belief, and to withdraw the attestation requirement in the Canada summer jobs programs.

ABANDONED VESSELS

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present today.

Petitioners from B.C.'s coast call on the government to take urgent action on the abandoned vessel problem. This could prevent oil spills and marine pollution, and could save marine jobs and tourism from the blight of abandoned vessels on our coast. Specifically, they call on the government to legislate to improve the vessel registration system, to create a fee to help with the cost of vessel disposal to get the cost off the backs of taxpayers, and to pilot a vessel turn-in program to deal with the backlog, which government Bill C-64 does not do.

These petitioners are from Parksville, West Vancouver, Ladysmith, Edmonton, Nanaimo, and Sydney, and they all call on the government to take action.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am presenting a petition from coastal people who urge the cancellation of the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion. Petitioners from Ucluelet, Qualicum, Parksville, Nanaimo, and Vancouver ask the government to cancel the purchase of the old Kinder Morgan pipeline, instead of paying \$4.5 billion to a Texas oil company. They request that the government invest in a renewable economy, recognize that the pipeline is opposed by a significant number of coastal communities, and that the problem of oil tanker risks and dilbit pollution have not yet been addressed.

• (1550)

IMMIGRATION

Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by constituents of Dufferin—Caledon. They call upon Parliament to encourage the Canadian government to work with the Government of Israel to facilitate the completion of sponsorship applications of asylum seekers from Africa so that they can immigrate to Canada as soon as possible.

CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, It is an honour to rise today to present a petition from my constituents. The petitioners believe the current Liberal government's proposed attestation requiring the applicants for the summer jobs program to hold the same views as the government would contravene the Canadian Charter of Rights. They are calling upon the Prime Minister to defend their freedoms of conscience, thought, and belief, and to withdraw the attestation requirement for applicants in the Canada summer jobs program.

[Translation]

FREE PRESCRIPTION BIRTH CONTROL

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the first petition I am presenting today has to do with free prescription birth control. As set out in the petition, the costs of birth control fall disproportionately to women, and this birth control is being prescribed by doctors based on women's needs. Canadians are calling on the Government of Canada to work with the provinces to ensure that the cost of all prescription birth control is covered.

TAX HAVENS

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition I am presenting today has to do with tax havens. Given that the use of tax havens results in massive revenue losses for the public treasury, the petitioners want the government to take action against tax havens. The petitioners are asking the Government of Canada to take the necessary legislative measures to combat tax havens in order to reduce social inequality in this country.

[English]

CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present petitions from Canadians concerned about

Routine Proceedings

the Liberal government's requirement that applicants for the Canada summer jobs program sign an attestation indicating that their views are in line with those of the Prime Minister. The petitioners call on the Prime Minister to defend the freedoms of conscience, thought, and belief for all Canadians, and to withdraw this unfair attestation requirement.

FALUN GONG

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition from Canadians from coast to coast.

The petitioners wish to draw to the attention of this House that 13 Canadians, including Canadian citizen Sun Qian and Canadian citizen applicant Aiyun He, are illegally incarcerated by the Chinese regime due to their spiritual beliefs in Falun Gong. In light of the fact that the United Nations, Amnesty International, and others have condemned the Chinese regime for egregious human rights violations against Falun Gong practitioners, the petitioners request that the Canadian Parliament and government call on Chinese officials to immediately end the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners and to release all prisoners of conscience, including Canadian citizens and their family members, and take every opportunity to establish measures to investigate the Chinese regime's alleged harvesting of organs of innocent people.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, I have three more petitions I would like to table today.

The first petition notes that the three deadliest words in the world are "It's a girl". The CBC has exposed how parents in Canada are using fetal —

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but in fact, because he had the opportunity to present a petition earlier in the proceedings in the time allotted for this, the additional petitions will have to wait for the next installment of presenting petitions, which will be tomorrow during routine proceedings.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition that supports Bill C-350 in the House of Commons, and Bill S-240 in the Senate, which deal with the trafficking of human organs obtained without consent or as a result of a financial transaction. These bills would make it illegal to acquire and would prohibit Canadians who are travelling abroad from acquiring human organs removed without consent or as a result of a financial transaction, and would render inadmissible to Canada any and all permanent residents or foreign nationals who have participated in this abhorrent trade in human organs.

I would like to recognize the work of my neighbour, the MP for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan on this issue.

Routine Proceedings

• (1555)

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Questions Nos. 1729, 1731, 1734, 1735, 1740, 1743, 1745, 1747, and 1749.

[Text]

Question No. 1729—**Mr. Alexander Nuttall:**

With regard to town hall meetings attended by the Prime Minister so far in 2018: (a) what are the dates and locations of each town hall; and (b) what were the total expenditures related to each town hall, broken down by item and type of expense?

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the financial system used by the Privy Council Office does not organize information in the manner requested in this question. Therefore, the Privy Council Office has no information with regard to total expenditures related to each town hall attended by the Prime Minister.

Question No. 1731—**Mr. Robert Kitchen:**

With regard to upstream and downstream emissions regulations and standards placed on Canadian oil producers: why is oil imported into Canada from Saudi Arabia, Iraq and the United States of America not subject to the same regulations and standards?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada does not have the authority to enforce regulatory or environmental standards in other countries.

Question No. 1734—**Mr. Chris Warkentin:**

With regard to Correctional Service of Canada institutions: (a) what is the current policy relating to inmates purchasing "take-out" food from outside the institution; (b) what is the current policy relating to inmates purchasing outside food not available from Food Services or the canteens; (c) what is the current policy for inmate committees purchasing outside food; and (d) since November 4, 2015, how many times have prisoners ordered "take out" food, broken down by institution?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), there are no provisions for the availability of restaurant takeout food in CSC's policy. However, the ordering of takeout food from restaurants for any inmate event is prohibited.

With regard to (b), inmates may purchase a limited number of food items, which are not available in canteens, through CSC's national supply catalogue for inmate purchasing.

With regard to (c), inmate committees may purchase a limited number of food items through canteens and the CSC's national supply catalogue for inmate purchasing.

With regard to (d), the question is not applicable.

Question No. 1735—**Mr. Steven Blaney:**

With regard to government funding of the Fundy Trail Parkway: (a) when is the project expected to be completed; (b) has the project encountered any unexpected delays or expenditures and, if so, what are the details of all such delays and expenditures; and (c) will additional funding be required to complete the project and, if so, what is the expected additional federal contribution required to complete the project?

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Infrastructure Canada, INFC, has not provided funding for the Fundy Trail Parkway. INFC has approved funding for the Fundy Trail connector road project in New Brunswick under the new building Canada fund provincial-territorial infrastructure component—national and regional projects program. PTIC-NRP. This project involves the upgrading of three existing provincial roadways, Little Salmon River Road, Creek Road, and Shepody Road, located between the Fundy Trail Parkway and Route 114 in Fundy National Park. INFC is providing a contribution of up to 33% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$13,244,000.

In response to (a), the Fundy Trail connector road project is currently in the design stage with pre-engineering work having been completed in 2016-17. The project is expected to be completed on November 30, 2021.

In response to (b), the Fundy Trail connector road project is progressing on schedule.

In response to (c), it is not expected that additional federal funding will be required. Any cost savings on this project would be reallocated to projects that have been prioritized by the province under PTIC-NRP.

Question No. 1740—**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:**

With regard to the decision by the National Gallery of Canada not to sell the "Eiffel Tower" painting by Marc Chagall: (a) what is the cancellation fee or other similar cost which must be paid to (i) Christie's or (ii) other vendors as a result of the cancellation; and (b) what input did (i) the Minister of Canadian Heritage, (ii) the Minister of Canadian Heritage's office, or (iii) the Department of Canadian Heritage have on the decision?

Mr. Sean Casey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (b), the National Gallery of Canada operates as an autonomous crown corporation, and is responsible for its day-to-day operations. The Museums Act provides the gallery with the legal authority to manage its collections and make decisions on acquisitions and deaccessions.

In response to (a)(i), in processing parliamentary returns, the government applies the Privacy Act and the principles set out in the Access to Information Act. The requested information has been withheld on the grounds that it is considered third party business sensitive.

In response to (a)(ii), there may be costs associated with shipping the painting back to Canada, but such details are unknown at this time.

Question No. 1743—**Mr. Mel Arnold:**

With regard to the impact of grey seals on the Atlantic fishery: what specific measures is the government (i) implementing, (ii) considering in order to address the impact of grey seals on the Atlantic Salmon, capelin, and Northern cod populations?

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Terry Beech (Parliamentary Secretary for Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (i), the Government of Canada is committed to supporting a sustainable, humane, and well-regulated seal harvest in Atlantic Canada. It is important that the harvesting of seals be supported by market demand, where full utilization of seal products such as meat, oil, and pelts is encouraged. Despite a significant allocation of grey seals available for harvest, and continued issuance of commercial and personal use licences, very few grey seals have been taken in recent years. Grey seal harvest levels remain much lower than that which could be taken while still maintaining a healthy and stable seal population.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada is working with indigenous and commercial seal product stakeholders to invest in projects that improve market access for seal products. Through the certification and market access program for seals, or CMAPS, established in 2015, Canada will contribute \$5.7 million over five years toward innovative projects aimed at developing new products or accessing new markets for seal products. Approximately one third of this contribution is for the commercial sealing industry.

A grey seal working group was established in 2017 upon recommendation from stakeholders at the Atlantic seal advisory committee meeting in March 2017. The purpose of this working group is to promote and advance the grey seal fishery by exploring regulatory, policy, and management changes that would facilitate future grey seal harvests and subsequent product development. Members include representatives from Fisheries and Oceans Canada, from the science, resource management, and trade and international market access branches; external experts; provincial governments; aboriginal groups; and industry stakeholders from Atlantic Canada and Quebec. The most recent meeting of the grey seal working group took place in December 2017, with a fall meeting planned for 2018.

In response to (ii), the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, or DFO, continues to study the interactions between grey seals and their prey, in collaboration with independent scientific experts and the fishing industry, to improve our understanding of the complex relationships between grey seals and other components of the Atlantic coastal ecosystem.

DFO's analysis has shown that while there is evidence that some individual seals in estuaries of the maritime provinces eat some Atlantic salmon, past and current research has not identified salmon as a staple of their diets, nor is predation deemed a significant factor influencing the Atlantic salmon population trends. There is no scientific evidence to support a dietary preference for salmon by seals.

While capelin can comprise up to about 30% of grey seal diets in some areas in the spring, roughly May to July, there is no evidence that grey seals have a significant impact on capelin populations and distribution. Various oceanographic factors such as ice conditions and the timing of the production of phytoplankton and zooplankton, capelin food, are expected to be among the main drivers of capelin populations.

The most recent science advice, from 2010, states that predation by grey seals is considered to be a significant component of cod

natural mortality in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence area only. Under natural mortality rates observed at that time, growth of the cod stock was not likely unless productivity was to increase well above levels observed over the previous decade. There is no new and definitive science advice available that specifically links grey seal predation to impacts on cod in areas beyond the southern gulf, including northern cod populations.

The department will continue to monitor and review the impacts of grey seals on important fish stocks. In considering any management actions involving grey seals in the future, the department will consult with scientific experts and affected stakeholders to ensure that any measures put forward are achievable, humane, and responsible, and that they will have a tangible, long-term impact on the recovery of important fish stocks, without compromising the sustainability of the grey seal population.

Question No. 1745—**Mr. Mel Arnold:**

With regard to government measures taken to address the overfishing of wild Atlantic salmon by vessels from Greenland: (a) what specific measures has the government taken since January 1, 2017, to address the issue; and (b) what is the contents of any data the government has on the impact of each measure referred to in (a), on the level of wild Atlantic salmon stocks?

Mr. Terry Beech (Parliamentary Secretary for Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), Canada engages with Greenland through the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization, or NASCO, bilaterally, and works with key stakeholders to consistently press Greenland to reduce its removals to levels that support conservation. In 2015, Greenland agreed to institute a three-year plan and to limit its catch to 45 tonnes per year. At the June 2017 NASCO annual meeting, Canada encouraged Greenland to continue to not permit factory landings as it had done in 2016. Greenland retained this ban in 2017, and catches for each year were reported at 27 tonnes and 26.8 tonnes respectively, a significant reduction compared to the 58 tonnes, 13 tonnes over-age, in 2015.

In August 2017, the Minister of Fisheries met bilaterally with Minister Kruse of Greenland and advanced Canada's interests, including to strengthen monitoring control and surveillance measures, as well as lower annual catch levels of Atlantic salmon.

Canada continued to work with Greenland and other members at the NASCO West Greenland Commission meeting in February 2018, and negotiations of a new three-year regulatory measure will conclude in June 2018 at the annual meeting of NASCO.

In response to (b), no specific data is presently available regarding the impacts of Greenland's measures.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1747—Ms. Rachael Harder:**

With regard to the gender based analysis of the federal carbon tax or a federally mandated price on carbon: (a) which departments conducted gender based analysis of the impacts of the carbon tax or a federally mandated price on carbon; (b) for each department that conducted a gender based analysis (i) was the gender based analysis in support of a policy item that did not go to a cabinet committee, (ii) was the department's gender based analysis completed prior to the Minister's consideration of the policy item for which the analysis was conducted, (iii) if the gender based analysis was not complete prior to the Minister's consideration of each policy item, why was it not completed in time, (iv) was the department's analysis completed prior to the Minister presenting the item to cabinet, (v) was the gender based analysis updated after a matter had been signed off by a Minister, (vi) was the gender based analysis updated after cabinet consideration on the policy item; and (c) which departments did not conduct gender based analysis of the impacts of the carbon tax or a federally mandated price on carbon?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), Environment and Climate Change Canada and Finance Canada conducted a gender-based analysis plus, GBA+, to assess the impacts of climate change and the proposed carbon pollution pricing backstop approach on diverse groups in society. This work included a literature review of gender and diversity implications of climate change and carbon pollution pricing policies.

In response to (b)(i), no, the GBA+ was for a policy item that did go to cabinet.

In response to (b)(ii), yes, the GBA+ was completed prior to the minister's consideration of the policy item.

In response to (b)(iii), this is not applicable.

In response to (b)(iv), yes, the GBA+ was completed prior to the minister's presentation of the policy item to cabinet.

In response to (b)(v), the GBA+ was subsequently updated to include additional analysis related to new policy developments and details that were not available when the initial GBA+ was completed.

In response to (b)(vi), the GBA+ was updated to include additional analysis related to new policy developments and details that were not available when the initial GBA+ was completed.

In response to (c), Environment and Climate Change Canada conducted the GBA+ undertaken with respect to carbon pricing.

Question No. 1749—Ms. Rachael Harder:

With regard to Gender Based Analysis on the impact of a federal carbon tax or a federally mandated price on carbon, for each department that has conducted such an analysis: (a) what is the list of initiatives for which Gender Based Analysis was prepared; and (b) for each of the initiatives mentioned in (a), (i) did the Gender Based Analysis consider the impact of a carbon tax on female single parent families, (ii) how did the Gender Based Analysis address female single parent families (as a specific group/as part of women generically), (iii) what was the anticipated impact on female single parent families according to the Gender Based Analysis, (iv) did the Gender Based Analysis consider the impact of a carbon tax on single elderly females, (v) how did the Gender Based Analysis address single elderly females (as a specific group/as part of women generically), (vi) what was the anticipated impact on single elderly females according to the Gender Based Analysis, (vii) did the Gender Based Analysis consider the impact of a carbon tax on females with a disability, (viii) how did the Gender Based Analysis address females with a disability (as a specific group/as part of women generically), (ix) what was the anticipated impact on females with a disability according to the Gender Based Analysis?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), a

preliminary gender-based analysis plus was conducted to assess the impacts of climate change and the proposed carbon pollution pricing backstop approach on diverse groups in society.

In response to (b), the design of the pan-Canadian approach to pricing carbon pollution sets a national standard for provincial and territorial carbon pricing systems to meet, but allows jurisdictions to choose both the type of pricing system to implement, as well as how the revenues are used. The net effect of pricing pollution on households in general, and on specific demographic groups, depends on a number of factors, particularly the choice of system in a given jurisdiction, whether it is a direct price, a cap-and-trade system, or a hybrid approach, and the ways that governments reinvest the revenues generated from pricing pollution. Different pricing systems will have different impacts, and revenues could be used to completely offset these impacts. As governments are still determining their approaches to these policy design questions, it is not yet possible to assess specific impacts until the details of the various pricing systems are known. Provinces and territories have been asked to provide details of how their systems meet the federal standard by September 1, 2018.

* * *

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, furthermore, if a supplementary response to Question No. 1685, originally tabled on June 8, 2018, and the government's responses to Questions Nos. 1730, 1732, 1733, 1736 to 1739, 1741, 1742, 1744, 1746, 1748, 1750, and 1751 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 1685—Mr. Randy Hoback:

With regard to reports that Facebook has not been registered as lobbyist and thus its meetings with the government have not been reported on the Lobbying Commissioner's website: (a) what are the details of all meetings between Facebook and the government, since November 4, 2015, including (i) date, (ii) location, (iii) list of attendees, (iv) purpose of meeting, (v) subject matter; and (b) what are the details of all briefing notes associated with the meetings in (a), including (i) date, (ii) title, (iii) summary, (iv) sender, (v) recipient, (vi) file number?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1730—Mr. Alexander Nuttall:**

With regard to the trip to India taken by the Prime Minister and other Ministers in February 2018, and excluding any invoices yet to be received: what are the details of all expenditures over \$1,000 related to the trip, including (i) vendor, (ii) date, (iii) amount, (iv) description of goods or services provided, including quantity, if known, (v) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1732—Mr. Dave Van Kesteren:

With regard to financial coding systems used by the government and broken down by department, agency, or other government entity: (a) what is the complete list of specific line object codes, ledger numbers, or similar financial tracking codes utilized by the government; (b) for each code in (a), what is the description of the item tracked by each code; and (c) for each code in (a), what is the total amount of revenue or expenditures associated with the code in the 2017-18 fiscal year?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1733—Mr. Dane Lloyd:

With regard to counterfeit goods discovered and seized by the Canada Border Services Agency, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or other relevant government entity, during the 2017-18 fiscal year: (a) what is the total value of the goods discovered, broken down by month; (b) broken down by seizure what is the breakdown of goods by (i) type, (ii) brand, (iii) quantity, (iii) estimated value, (iv) location or port of entry where the goods were discovered; (c) what percentage of the estimated total value of counterfeit imported goods are intercepted by the government; and (d) what is the government's estimate for the value of counterfeit goods which enter Canada annually and avoid seizure by the government?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1736—Mr. David Sweet:

With regard to unescorted temporary absences for inmates in Correctional Service of Canada institutions, since November 4, 2015: (a) how many individuals serving an indeterminate sentence have been granted unescorted temporary absences; (b) for those individuals referred to in (a), what are the index offences for each individual who was granted an unescorted temporary absence; (c) for those individuals referred to in (a), what was the purpose and duration of each unescorted temporary absence; (d) for those individuals referred to in (a), how many individuals became unlawfully at large during the period of their unescorted temporary absence; (e) how many individuals serving life sentences have been granted unescorted temporary absences; (f) for those individuals referred to in (e), what are the index offences for each individual who was granted an unescorted temporary absence; (g) for those individuals referred to in (e), what was the purpose and duration of each unescorted temporary absence; (h) for those individuals referred to in (e), how many individuals became unlawfully at large during the period of their unescorted temporary absence; (i) how many individuals serving a sentence of 25 years or more have been granted unescorted temporary absences; (j) for those individuals referred to in (i), what are the index offences for each individual who was granted an unescorted temporary absence; (k) for those individuals referred to in (i), what was the purpose and duration of each unescorted temporary absence; (l) for those individuals referred to in (i), how many individuals became unlawfully at large during the period of their unescorted temporary absence; (m) how many individuals serving a sentence of ten years or more have been granted unescorted temporary absences; (n) for those individuals referred to in (m), what are the index offences for each individual who was granted an unescorted temporary absence; (o) for those individuals referred to in (m), what was the purpose and duration of each unescorted temporary absence; and (p) for those individuals referred to in (m), how many individuals became unlawfully at large during the period of their unescorted temporary absence?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1737—Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus:

With regard to illegal border crossings by individuals: (a) does the government believe it is illegal to cross the border at any place other than a port of entry; (b) does the matter of illegal border crossings fall under the jurisdiction of the RCMP or the Canada Border Services Agency; and (c) which agency or police force is responsible for apprehending individuals who have illegally crossed the border, broken down by geographic area?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1738—Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus:

With regard to individuals who have illegally crossed the border, since December 1, 2016, and are now seeking asylum: (a) what is the current wait time for receiving an Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) hearing; (b) how many such individuals have failed to appear at their scheduled IRB hearing; (c) how many such individuals have been deported; (d) what is the number of such individuals who have crossed the border, broken down by country of origin; (e) how many such individuals were deported for (i) national security reasons, (ii) terrorism charges, (iii) public safety reasons; (f) what is the breakdown of (e) by (i) individuals deported upon initial screening, (ii) individuals deported at a later date; (g) how many such individuals have been detained or incarcerated; and (h) how many such individuals are currently under a deportation order?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1739—Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:

With regard to expenditures at hotels by the Privy Council Office (PCO) and the Office of the Prime Minister (PMO): (a) what is the total of all such expenditures in (i) November 2017, (ii) December 2017, (iii) January 2018; (b) what are the details of all expenditures in (a), including (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) date of contract or invoice, (iv) description of goods or services, (v) file number, (vi) indication if expense was incurred by PCO or PMO, (vii) location; and (c) for any blocks or groups of hotel rooms purchased in regards to (a), what are the details of each such purchase, including (i) name of hotel, (ii) number of room nights purchased, (iii) nightly room rate, including any applicable taxes, (iv) total amount?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1741—Mr. Phil McColeman:

With regard to Veterans Affairs Canada offices and the government's response to Question on the Order Paper number Q-1550: (a) what was the capital cost incurred in relation to the re-opening of the offices mentioned in Q-1550, broken down by office; and (b) what is the net rent cost being paid for each of the office properties?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1742—Mr. Dan Albas:

With regard to recent tax changes by the United States of America that impose retroactive taxes on Canadian dual-citizens who own Canadian corporations with retained earnings: (a) will the amount withdrawn by such individuals for the purpose of paying the new tax imposed by the US be also subject to Canadian income tax; and (b) what specific measures, if any, is the government implementing to ensure that such Canadians are not subject to double-taxation?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1744—Mr. Mel Arnold:

With regard to projects funded to date under the Atlantic Fisheries Fund: what are the details of all such projects, including (i) project name, (ii) description, (iii) location, (iv) recipient, (v) amount of federal contribution, (vi) riding, (vii) date of announcement?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1746—Mr. John Nater:

With regard to information sharing between the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and the Canada Council for the Arts: is being designated a professional artist by the Canada Council for the Arts sufficient proof in order to prevent the CRA from declaring an individual to be a "hobby artist"?

(Return tabled)

*Speaker's Ruling***Question No. 1748—Ms. Rachael Harder:**

With regard to funding from the Department of Justice through the Victims Fund - Child Advocacy Centres: what are the details of all (a) announced grant funding, broken down by (i) name of the recipient, (ii) municipality and address of the recipient, (iii) date on which the funding was awarded, (iv) date on which the funding was received, (v) amount received; (b) unannounced grant funding, broken down by (i) name of the recipient, (ii) municipality of the recipient, (iii) date on which the funding was awarded, (iv) date on which the funding was received, (v) amount received; and (c) the amounts of the remaining unallocated funding?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1750—Ms. Rachael Harder:

With regard to the economic empowerment and equality of females, for the years 2000 to 2018, broken down by calendar year, what are the: (a) hourly wages for full-time employment for females (18+); (b) hourly wages for full-time employment for males (18+); (c) comparison between the hourly wages for full-time employment between females and males (18+) expressed as a percentage; (d) hourly wages for part-time employment for females (18+); (e) hourly wages for part-time employment for males (18+); (f) comparison between the hourly wages for part-time employment between females and males (18+) expressed as a percentage; (g) percentage of females in full-time work; (h) percentage of males in full-time work; (i) percentage of females in part-time work; (j) percentage of males in part-time work; (k) percentage of females in self-employed work; (l) percentage of males in self-employed work; (m) percentage of females not participating in the formal workforce; (n) percentage of males not participating in the formal workforce; (o) total average pre-tax income for females with full-time work; (p) total average pre-tax income for males with full-time work; (q) total average after-tax income for females with full-time work; (r) total average after-tax income for males with full-time work; (s) average transfers from the Federal Government to females (18+); (t) average transfers from the government to males (18+); (u) average transfers from other levels of government to females (18+); (v) average transfers from other levels of government to males (18+); (w) percentage of females in poverty (LICO), (i) percentage of all females in poverty, (ii) percentage of females under the age of 18, (iii) percentage of females between 18 and 64, (iv) percentage of females 65+, (v) percentage of single females with no dependants, (vi) percentage of single females with dependants, (vii) percentage of married females, (viii) percentage of divorced/widowed females, (ix) percentage of females who are a visible minority, (x) percentage of females with a disability; (y) percentage of females in poverty (market-basket-measure), (i) percentage of all females in poverty, (ii) percentage of females under the age of 18, (iii) percentage of females between 18 and 64, (iv) percentage of females 65+, (v) percentage of single females with no dependants, (vi) percentage of single females with dependants, (vii) percentage of married females, (viii) percentage of divorced/widowed females, (ix) percentage of females who are a visible minority, (x) percentage of females with a disability; (z) percentage of businesses owned by females, (i) total number of businesses owned by females, (ii) total number of small businesses owned by females, (iii) total number of medium sized businesses owned by females, (iv) total number of large businesses owned by females; (aa) percentage of females on the corporate boards of private businesses (federally and provincially regulated businesses); (bb) percentage of females on boards appointed by the Governor in Council; (cc) representation of females, as a percentage, in the civil service (employed in the civil service), (i) percentage at the Deputy Minister level, (ii) percentage at the executive level, (iii) percentage at the management level, (iv) percentage at the employee level; (dd) percentage of females in the diplomatic core, (i) percentage of ambassadors/high-commissioners, (ii) percentage of diplomatic postings, (iii) percentage of employees in Canadian embassies/high-commissions abroad?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1751— Mr. Gord Johns:

With regard to the costs in legal fees, mediation and compensation for appeals and out of court settlements involving veterans, paid by the government, since 2008: (a) how many legal cases involving veterans were brought to court since 2008, broken down by (i) year, (ii) costs associated with expenses and other fees paid by the government, (iii) number of cases before the courts involving veterans, (iv) types of cases before the courts, (v) length of legal proceedings, in days, months or years; (b)

how many legal cases involving veterans were settled out of court since 2008, broken down by (i) year, (ii) number of out of court settlements, (iii) amounts of out of court settlements and agreements, (iv) types of proceedings, (v) other expenses or fees associated with these settlements, (vi) length of talks between parties to reach an agreement in days, months or years; (c) since 2008, how many cases were ruled in favour of the government against veterans, broken down by (i) year, (ii) types of cases won by the government, (iii) total of expenses and legal fees paid, (iv) length of legal proceedings in days, months or year; (d) since 2008, how many cases, ruled in favour of the government against veterans, were appealed, broken down by (i) year, (ii) type of cases, (iii) court decision, (iv) all expenses and fees paid by the government; (e) since 2008, how many cases were ruled in favour of veterans against the government, broken down by (i) year, (ii) types of cases won by veterans, (iii) amounts won and reimbursed to veterans; (f) since 2008, how many cases ruled in favour of veterans against the government were appealed by the government, broken down by (i) year, (ii) types of cases, (iii) court decision, (iv) all expenses and fees paid by the government, (v) length of legal proceedings in days, months or years; (g) what amounts have veterans received in legal aid, since 2008, in legal proceedings involving veterans and the government, broken down by (i) year, (ii) legal aid amounts, (iii) types of cases heard; (h) what fees and expenses were paid by the government, since 2008, for mediation involving veterans or groups of veterans, broken down by (i) year, (ii) number of cases heard by a mediator, (iii) amount of mediation expenses paid by the government, (iv) types of cases heard by a mediator, (v) types of agreements reached between parties, namely the government and the veterans; and (i) since 2008, which law or mediation firms were hired by the government, broken down by (i) year, (ii) name of firms, (iii) amounts paid to each firm?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Translation]

POINT OF ORDER

STANDING ORDER 69.1—BILL C-59—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair is now prepared to rule on the point of order raised June 11, 2018 by the hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly concerning the applicability of Standing Order 69.1 to Bill C-59, an act respecting national security matters.

The Chair would like to thank the hon. member for having raised this question, as well as the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons for his intervention.

The hon. member argued that Bill C-59 is an omnibus bill as he feels it contains several different initiatives which should be voted on separately. On a point of order raised on November 20, 2017, he initially asked the Chair to divide the question on the motion to refer the bill to committee before second reading. As the Speaker ruled on the same day, Standing Order 69.1 clearly indicates that the Chair only has such a power in relation to the motions for second reading and for third reading of a bill. The Speaker invited members to raise their arguments once again in relation to the motion for third reading.

[English]

The hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly pointed out that each of the three parts of the bill enacts a new statute. Part 1 enacts the national security and intelligence review agency act, part 2 enacts the intelligence commissioner act, while part 3 enacts the Communications Security Establishment act. He argued that since each of the first two parts establishes a new entity, with details of each entity's mandate and powers, and since the third significantly expands the mandate of the CSE, he felt they should each be voted upon separately. He also argued that each part amends a variety of other acts, though the chair notes that in most cases, these are consequential amendments to change or add the name of the entities in question in other acts.

The hon. member argued that parts 4 and 5 of the bill should be voted on together. They deal with new powers being given to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, CSIS, relating to metadata collection and threat disruption, as well as with the disclosure of information relating to security matters between government departments.

● (1600)

[Translation]

As part 6 deals with the Secure Air Travel Act and what is commonly referred to as the "no-fly list", he felt that this was a distinct matter and that it should be voted upon separately.

Finally, the hon. member proposed grouping together parts 7, 8, 9, and 10 for a single vote. Part 7 deals with changes to the Criminal Code relating to terrorism, while part 8 deals with similar concepts in relation to young offenders. Part 9 provides for a statutory review of the entire bill after six years, while part 10 contains the coming into force provisions.

[English]

In his intervention on the matter, the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader indicated that the provisions of the bill are linked by a common thread that represents the enhancement of Canada's national security, as well as the protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of Canadians. In order to achieve these objectives, he mentioned that it is necessary for Bill C-59 to touch on a number of acts, and that the bill should be seen as a whole, with several parts that would not be able to achieve the overall objective of the bill on their own. He concluded that Standing Order 69.1 should not apply in this case.

Standing Order 69.1 gives the Speaker the power to divide the question on a bill where there is not a common element connecting all the various provisions or where unrelated matters are linked.

Speaker's Ruling

Bill C-59 does clearly contain several different initiatives. It establishes new agencies and mechanisms for oversight of national security agencies and deals with information collection and sharing as well as criminal offences relating to terrorism. That said, one could argue, as the parliamentary secretary did, that since these are all matters related to national security, there is, indeed, a common thread between them. However, the question the Chair must ask itself is whether these specific measures should be subjected to separate votes.

[Translation]

On March 1, 2018, the Speaker delivered a ruling regarding Bill C-69 where he indicated that he believed Standing Order 69.1 could be applied to a bill with multiple initiatives, even if they all related to the same policy field. In this particular case, while the Chair has no trouble agreeing that all of the measures contained in Bill C-59 relate to national security, it is the Chair's view that there are distinct initiatives that are sufficiently unrelated as to warrant dividing the question. Therefore, the Chair is prepared to divide the question on the motion for third reading of the bill.

The hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly has asked for six separate votes, one on each of the first three parts, one on parts 4 and 5, one on part 6, and one on parts 7 to 10. While the Chair understands his reasoning, it does not entirely agree with his conclusions as to how the question should be divided.

[English]

As each of the first three parts of the bill does, indeed, enact a new act, the Chair can see why he would like to see each one voted upon separately. However, the Chair's reading of the bill is that these three parts establish an overall framework for oversight and national security activities. For example, the national security and intelligence review agency, which would be created by part 1, has some oversight responsibilities for the Communications Security Establishment provided for in part 3, as does the intelligence commissioner, established in part 2. Furthermore, the intelligence commissioner also has responsibilities related to datasets, provided for in part 4, as does the review agency. Given the multiple references in each of these parts to the entities established by other parts, these four parts will be voted upon together.

Part 5 deals with the disclosure of information between various government institutions in relation to security matters. While the relationship between it and the first four parts is not quite as strong, as the member indicated that he believed that parts 4 and 5 could be grouped together, the Chair is prepared to include part 5 in the vote on parts 1 to 4.

Government Orders

● (1605)

[Translation]

The hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly has not addressed the question of the new part 1.1 added to Bill C-59 by the adoption of an amendment to that effect during clause-by-clause consideration of the bill. Part 1.1 enacts the avoiding complicity in mistreatment by foreign entities act, which deals with information sharing in situations where there is a risk of mistreatment of individuals by foreign entities. Since the national security and intelligence review agency, created by part 1 of the bill, must review all directions prescribed in this new part, it is logical that this part be included in the vote on parts 1 to 5.

The Chair agrees with the hon. member that part 6 dealing with the “no-fly list” is a distinct matter and that it should be voted upon separately. The Chair also agree that parts 7 and 8 can be grouped together for a vote. Both largely deal with criminal matters, one in the Criminal Code and the other in the Youth Criminal Justice Act.

[English]

The Chair has wrestled with where to place parts 9 and 10. They are, in the words of the hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly, largely procedural elements, but they apply to the entire act. Part 9 provides for a legislative review of the act, while part 10 contains the coming into force provisions for the entire act. The Chair also must ensure that the title and preamble of the bill are included in one of the groups.

There is an obvious solution for coming into force provisions in part 10. Since clauses 169 to 172 relate to the coming into force of parts 1 to 5 of the bill, they will be voted on with those parts. As clause 173 deals with the coming into force of part 6, it will be included in the vote on that part.

This leaves the title and the preamble as well as the legislative review provided for in part 9, which is clause 168. Though these apply to the entire bill, the Chair has decided to include them in the largest grouping, which contains parts 1 to 5 of the bill.

[Translation]

Therefore, to summarize, there will be three votes in relation to the third reading of Bill C-59. The first vote will deal with parts 1 to 5 of the bill, as well as the title, the preamble, part 9 regarding the legislative review, and clauses 169 to 172 dealing with coming into force provisions. The second vote relates to part 6 of the bill and the coming into force provisions contained in clause 173. The third vote relates to parts 7 and 8 of the bill. The Chair will remind hon. members of these divisions before the voting begins.

[English]

I thank all hon. members for their attention.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1610)

[English]

IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACT

The House resumed from June 12 consideration of the motion that Bill C-69, An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the third time and passed.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time today with the hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George.

The proposed legislation before us is very concerning for me, and I will tell members why.

I am a member of Parliament who is very fortunate to have grown up in my riding of Calgary Midnapore and to represent the place where I grew up. Calgary Midnapore is a beautiful riding in the south-central part of Calgary. It is home to five beautiful lakes. I was very fortunate to have grown up in one of these lake communities, called Lake Bonavista. In addition to Lake Bonavista, there is Lake Midnapore, Lake Chaparral, and Lake Sundance. We are so very fortunate to have come from these communities, which are lovely family environments. People grow up in the summer swimming in these lakes and in the winter skating on them. These communities really are the backbone of the riding.

These communities were built on the back of the energy sector, the oil and gas sector. It is something everyone in the community recognizes. Everyone is very proud that these lovely communities were built with the oil and gas sector. When we went to school in Calgary Midnapore, it was with the hope that one day, we would go on to high school and perhaps the University of Calgary, where we have prestigious business and engineering programs. I am a very proud graduate of the University of Calgary.

When I went to my niece Samantha's grade 4 graduation six years ago, all the students who were moving on to middle school went to the microphone and said what they hoped to do. Outside of many young people there wanting to be hockey players, so many said that they wanted to be accountants or engineers like their moms and go on to work in the oil and gas sector.

This was just part of who we were and our upbringing. We would grow up in these lovely communities and get an education with not only the hope but the confidence that we would have good jobs in the oil and gas sector when we were finished our education. We would get married, raise families, and have confidence that we would be able to provide for our families as a result of the oil and gas sector, which was so relied upon by this community for so long. It was such a backbone of not only Calgary Midnapore but of Calgary itself, Alberta, and beyond. It is similar, perhaps, to how people in our capital might reference the public sector.

In addition to that, there was an appreciation of the National Energy Board. It was seen as an institution in Calgary. It was well understood that the decisions that came out of the National Energy Board had gone through a rigorous process, with proper consideration of all the factors necessary to support a thriving oil and gas sector and a prudent oil and gas sector, one that took into account the many needs and considerations of project approval.

These are two sacred cows in the riding I represent and grew up in: the oil and gas sector, and the confidence within that sector; and the National Energy Board. Unfortunately, with Bill C-69, we are seeing these concepts, these things Calgarians count on, thrown out the window entirely. These things will not exist any longer as we knew them before.

• (1615)

It is because of these considerations that provide so much more uncertainty in this sector, not only for the citizens of Calgary Midnapore, but in Calgary and beyond. Of course, the considerations I am referring to are numerous, but they include health, social issues, gender issues, and indigenous rights.

Therefore, going forward, everything has changed as we know it in the oil and gas sector for my constituents of Calgary Midnapore. We are seeing this take place in a number of ways, and one is in the uncertainty of project approval. I have a quote from the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association.

CEPA is very concerned with the scope of the proposed new Impact Assessment process. From the outset, CEPA has stated that individual project reviews are not the appropriate place to resolve broad policy issues, such as climate change, which should be part of a Pan-Canadian Framework. Including these policy issues adds a new element of subjectivity that could continue to politicize the assessment process.

That is what I said when the NEB review came out last year. I said that the right hon. Prime Minister wrote the report he wanted, and he got the outcomes he wanted in regard to what I believe is essentially destroying the NEB. Everything certainly has changed.

We are hearing a lot of other things in regard to project approvals from industry members themselves, who are very concerned. Here is a quote from a land manager at Cona Resources, a foreign investment company that has left Canada. I will talk a little more about this later, but it is not alone in its exodus. It said, "To a certain extent, Canada will remain a higher cost country because of the social infrastructure that we have in place and our social licence to operate. While there is some opportunity to reduce some of those, the costs are not a net benefit to the country. I don't think that is what is deterring foreign investment. I think if we had greater consistency in both the royalties and taxation structure, people would be more comfortable. The uncertainty is what drives away project approval and foreign investment, and you have to sort of rely on your desire. If the project is a net benefit to Canada as a whole, you have to trust that the federal government will be able to enforce the decisions that were made, and trust that they are making the right decisions."

Therefore, Bill C-69 is very concerning to industry members as well.

With regard to uncertainty to market access, we have seen that in a number of projects recently. Petronas LNG, a \$36-billion project, has left Canada as a result of the uncertainty of project approval, and therefore market access. Keystone, with 830,000 barrels of oil a day,

an \$8-billion project, is at this time not going forward. Energy east, a \$15.7-billion project, was abandoned, squarely on the NEB decision to consider direct and indirect greenhouse emissions. Northern gateway would have provided close to 4,000 jobs.

What else are we seeing? We are seeing foreign investment fleeing, as I mentioned previously. The corporations are too numerous to mention, but I will name a few of them. There is Royal Dutch Shell. It has gone. Growing up in Calgary Midnapore, I remember during the 1988 winter Olympics, people wearing their Shell jackets with pride. There is Statoil, a Norwegian company. We have heard a lot about Norway in our conversations here. Marathon Oil is out the door, as is ConocoPhillips. Investment is simply not attractive in Canada at this time, and we continue to see these investments leaving Canada.

I mentioned previously an event I went to called SelectUSA, where the U.S. consulates network is working very hard to attract even Canadian investment outside of Canada to the States. That is because that environment is providing a more competitive environment and better place for corporations to do business at this time.

• (1620)

In conclusion, I will say for Calgary Midnapore and Canadians that things will never be the same after Bill C-69.

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when I saw this bill, I happened to be sitting in on committee one night when the committee members were voting on over 300 amendments that were put forward, and half of the amendments came from the Liberals on their own bill. I could not believe it.

Does the member feel that the foreign investment and the investment fleeing from Canada is because of the extra regulation that this bill would put in place? Is investment fleeing because of the extra taxation that the Liberal government is putting in place? Is it because of the uncertainty that the Liberal government is putting in place? Is it all of the above? I give you a multiple-choice question; I am sure you will have multiple answers.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Before we go to the hon. member, I want to remind everyone to place their questions through the Speaker and not directly, even if the person is right behind them. It just makes it that much easier if one goes through the Speaker.

The hon. member for Calgary Midnapore.

Government Orders

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Sadly, Mr. Speaker, my colleague from North Okanagan—Shuswap knows that the response is “all of the above”. It is for a multitude of reasons that we are in fear of this piece of legislation, and for all of those reasons, the project approval, the uncertainty in regard to market access, the foreign investment that is in large exodus from Canada. The sad thing is that there are so many other reasons beyond those three, and as they relate specifically to Bill C-69, they are the carbon tax, red tape, taxation structures in general. It is a very unfortunate time for not only the oil and gas sector, but for Canadian industry in general. I am very worried for the future of not only my son, but for all the young inhabitants of Calgary Midnapore.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleagues have asked my colleague from Calgary Midnapore questions on a number of the packages that are contained in this bill. It also is relevant to Bill C-68 and the Fisheries Act. We noted that in our speeches last week as well. My colleague has talked about the number of businesses that have left Canada because of some of these regulations that are too onerous for them to be here and continue to work in the oil industry. One number we have heard is that \$88 billion has left, and 110,000 jobs out of Alberta. I wonder if the member could expand on that.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Mr. Speaker, it is certainly an incredible amount of investment that has fled, but the member reminds me of the irony of this situation. I believe that the Liberal government and the environment minister are doing this in an attempt to improve the environment. The irony is that in fact what will happen is carbon leakage. Canadians would be fortunate if these corporations decided to take their business to the U.S., compared to other jurisdictions where the environmental standards are far worse. However, that is what is going to happen if we do not create a better business environment for the natural resources sector to operate within. Not only is there fleeing investment, but the whole purpose of this piece of legislation is defeated. Corporations will move to the jurisdictions where it is the least expensive to do business, and frequently that will be nations that do not have the same high standards that the oil and gas sector in Canada has had for decades.

• (1625)

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our colleague from Calgary Midnapore for a very heartfelt intervention. I think I have just scrapped my entire speech because of what our colleague has mentioned.

It brought me back to growing up in the Cariboo and what our thoughts and dreams were as kids. I was one of the those kids who wanted to be a hockey player and to move on. However, the reality was, we were probably going to become a logger or a farmer, because that is what we did, and that is what we do very well in the Cariboo.

Bill C-69 bring us back to yet another failed election promise of the Liberals and to some of what we have mentioned throughout this House over recent days, weeks, and months. When the member for Papineau was campaigning in 2015, he talked about letting debate reign, yet here we sit.

This is the 44th time allocation that has been imposed on this House, meaning that the members of Parliament on the opposition side, and the Canadians who elected them, have not had the full

opportunity to present their feelings about what the government is doing, whether it is on Bill C-69, Bill C-59, Bill C-71, or Bill C-68.

Thank goodness that the Standing Orders dictate that private members' bills cannot be time allocated, and our late colleague, Senator Enverga's private member's bill, Bill S-218, has had the full breadth of comments and support.

Bill C-69 seeks to reverse the 2012 changes to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. I will bring us back again to the promise from the member for Papineau, or one of the Liberals, who said that the government would undertake a full review of laws, policies, and operational practices when it comes to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.

There are a number of people, groups, and organizations that have serious concerns over what Bill C-69 proposes. Our hon. colleague has mentioned, and it has been mentioned before, that most notably the legislation says it intends to decrease the timelines for both major and minor projects. Unfortunately, there are a myriad of ministerial and Governor in Council exemptions that can be exercised to slow down approvals.

What Bill C-69 represents is not a further clarification of the rules and regulations so that project proponents and those who are trying to enforce the act know where they stand, but rather it muddies the waters. What we have heard time and again, what the committee heard time and again, was that it was a wait and see. There was a lot of concern, and indeed those very groups, the environmental groups, that the Liberals campaigned to and got their vote are now saying that it does not meet the standards.

We have seen this over and over again with the government. It likes to say it has consulted with Canadians, and its Liberal members stand with their hand on their heart and talk about how important consultation is. Yet we know, time and again, as it is with the cannabis legislation, the Liberals are rushing legislation through without fully looking at some of the concerns that have been brought forward by the groups, the organizations, and the stakeholders who are going to be most impacted.

Let us talk about the Arctic surf clam in my file. I cannot stand up and do a speech nowadays without bringing up this injustice. The minister was given the authority and the discretion to go in and implement policy, without anybody checking how this would impact the stakeholders, and without the minister consulting about how that policy would impact those on the ground, the stakeholders, whose livelihoods truly depend on the Arctic surf clam fishery. These are some of the concerns that we have.

When the member for Papineau was campaigning, he said that omnibus bills were done for, and yet here we are again debating another 400-page piece of legislation.

• (1630)

He also talked about maybe having a small deficit of \$10 billion. We now know that it will not be our children but our grandchildren who will see a balanced budget, because of the Liberal government's spending.

Bill C-69 represents more broken promises, and it does nothing to give confidence to industry. We know at this time that foreign investment is fleeing our nation at record levels. The CEO from Suncor recently spoke to Bill C-69 and said that it had absolutely put a nail in the coffin of Canadian investment in industry.

The government would like everyone to believe that it knows best and that the Ottawa-developed policies have the best intentions for Canadians, yet the Liberals are not listening when Canadians are speaking. They are not allowing members of Parliament to stand and bring the voices of Canadians to Parliament.

It would not be one of my speeches if I did not remind the House and Canadians that the House does not belong to me, and it sure as heck does not belong to those on the government side. It belongs to Canadians. All 338 members of Parliament and the Canadians who elected them deserve to have a say and to have their voices heard. When the government is forcing time allocation on pieces of legislation that fundamentally are going to have an impact on Canadians' lives, Canadians deserve to have a say.

Industry is shaken at the government's lack of consultation and lack of understanding on how we are moving forward. A good friend of mine, the hon. member for North Okanagan—Shuswap, asked our colleague from Calgary Midnapore about the industry's lack of confidence. Is it the carbon tax and the fact that the government refuses to tell Canadians how much it is going to be? Is it Bill C-69, the regulatory environment, that is shaking the confidence of the industry? Is it other legislation that is shaking the confidence of industry, or is it all of the above?

I would offer one more. The Prime Minister, in one of his earliest speeches to the world, spoke about how Canada was going to be known more for its resourcefulness than for its natural resources. The Liberals have waged war against our energy sector from day one. He said he wished the government could phase out the energy sector sooner and apologized for it.

Canadians and the energy sector, our natural resource industry, deserve a champion. The Minister of Natural Resources has said that it is about time our forestry producers and our energy producers got in line with what the world is doing in terms of technology and sustainable harvesting.

Whether it is our softwood lumber producers, our oil and gas producers, our fishermen on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, or our farmers, Canada has some of the best, if not the best, in terms of technology and harvesting. They are leading the way. They just need a champion. Guess what? They will have that in 2019, when the Conservatives regain the right side of the House.

• (1635)

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are a few things the member and I have discussed that he did not bring up in his speech, and I would like him to elaborate on those if he could. He said that the Liberal government is not listening to Canadians. However, it is listening to foreign influence, which is being driven into our coastal communities and our resource sector. We have seen it time and again. It is having an incredibly negative effect on our economy and our resource sector.

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Canada was built on our resource sector. We now have a cleaner resource sector than anywhere else in the world, yet the Liberal government is shutting it down due to influence from foreign operations that do not want to see Canada succeed as a resource country. I would like to ask the member if he could elaborate more on that foreign influence.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague from North Okanagan—Shuswap brings up a great point. I meant to bring it up, but I got so excited about all the other topics.

Bill C-69 and Bill C-68 are fluff pieces that kind of weighed into the 2015 campaign promises to the environmental groups. Fishermen groups have come to my office to tell me that when the Conservatives were in power, they could get in to see a minister, and now they need to go through an environmental group to see a minister. I have also heard that sitting around the table to develop this policy are more environmental groups than the actual stakeholders whom this is going to affect the most. We also know who is calling the shots at the highest level of government. It is Gerald Butts, who was the president and CEO of the World Wildlife Fund prior to coming to his current office and calling the shots.

Bill C-69 represents another fluff piece of legislation that both sides have said does not go far enough. I have said it before: Canadians and industry deserve a champion, and they are going to get one in 2019.

Mr. Scott Simms (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a great amount of respect for my hon. colleague. However, there are a couple of minor things, minor to some and major to others, that I would like to bring up.

First, this is not particularly germane to the debate, but he talked about the surf clam issue. I was equally disappointed about the issue, to be quite honest. There was consultation beforehand. There was some interest in my riding, and people brought their issues forward. They were consulted with, and had contact.

I would like to touch on a second point, which is the fact that there were promises made and promises kept from a prior administration. The Conservatives promised custodial management of the nose and tail of the Grand Banks. The changes they made allowed foreigners to not only manage the outside, where they are now, but manage inside the 200-mile limit as well, an egregious mistake that some day we will pay for and try to make up for.

The member mentioned that in the past, under the Conservative regime, fishery stakeholders did meet with the minister. I would ask him to name one.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct the record. I have so much respect for my hon. colleague across the way. Perhaps he is now trying to ingratiate himself back into the good graces of the Prime Minister as he needs his papers signed, and that is why he has asked this question. Nobody else has asked that question or a question on this point.

Government Orders

I will answer his question on the surf clam issue. If he checks the record, he will find that I was not talking about consultation on the surf clam. I was talking about the minister's authority to arbitrarily take 25% of the quota and, I might add, award it to the brother of a sitting Liberal MP, the member of Parliament for Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, an egregious error and decision, all under the guise of reconciliation. We now know that the group he awarded it to had the lowest number of first nations people. How shameful is it that the Liberals are using the term "reconciliation", which is supposed to bring first nations and non-first nations together rather than pit them against one another, as a reason for their ill will?

• (1640)

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): It being 4:40 p.m., pursuant to an order made on Wednesday, June 6, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill now before the House.

[English]

The question is on the motion that this question be now put. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

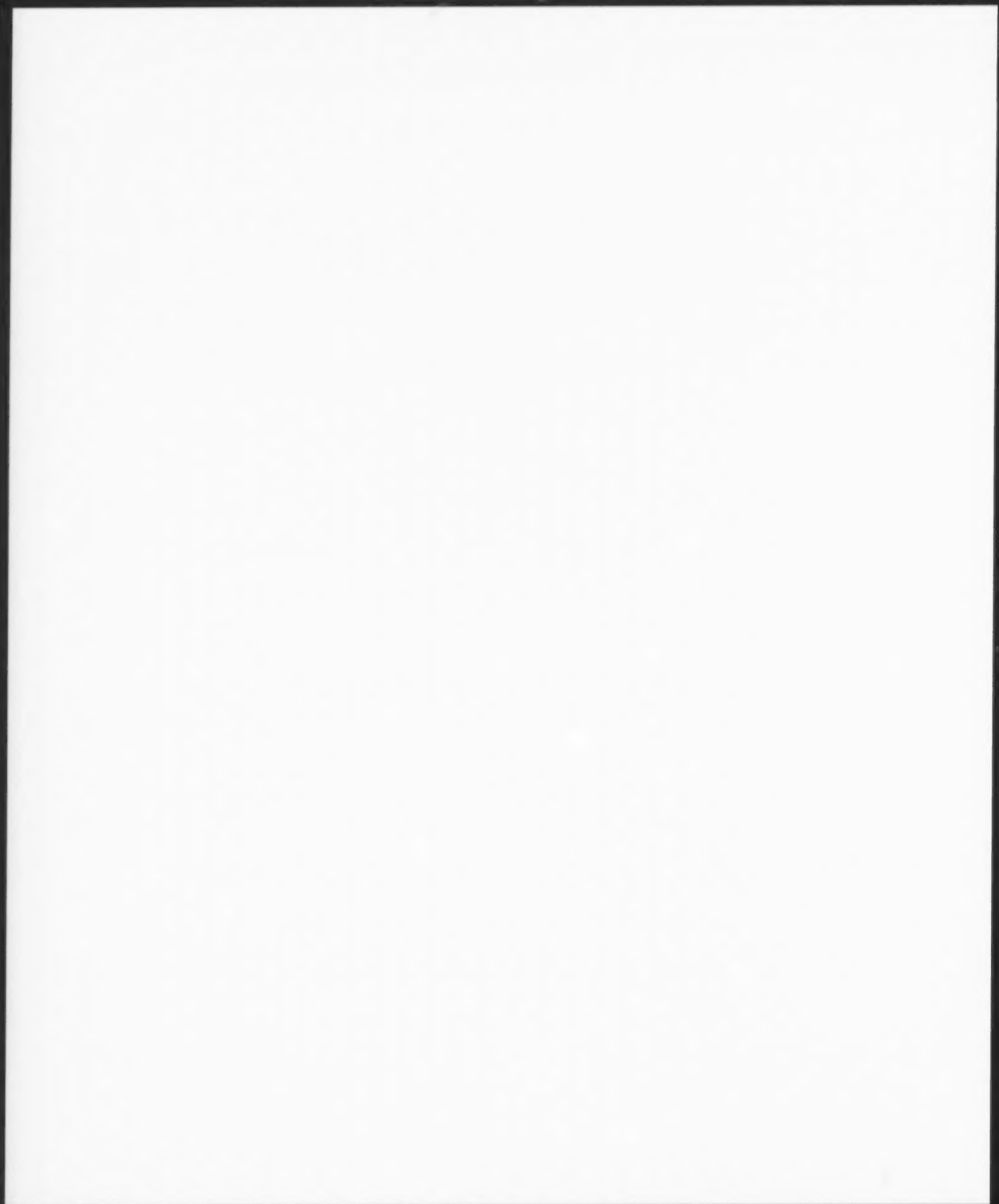
The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): In my opinion the yeas have it.

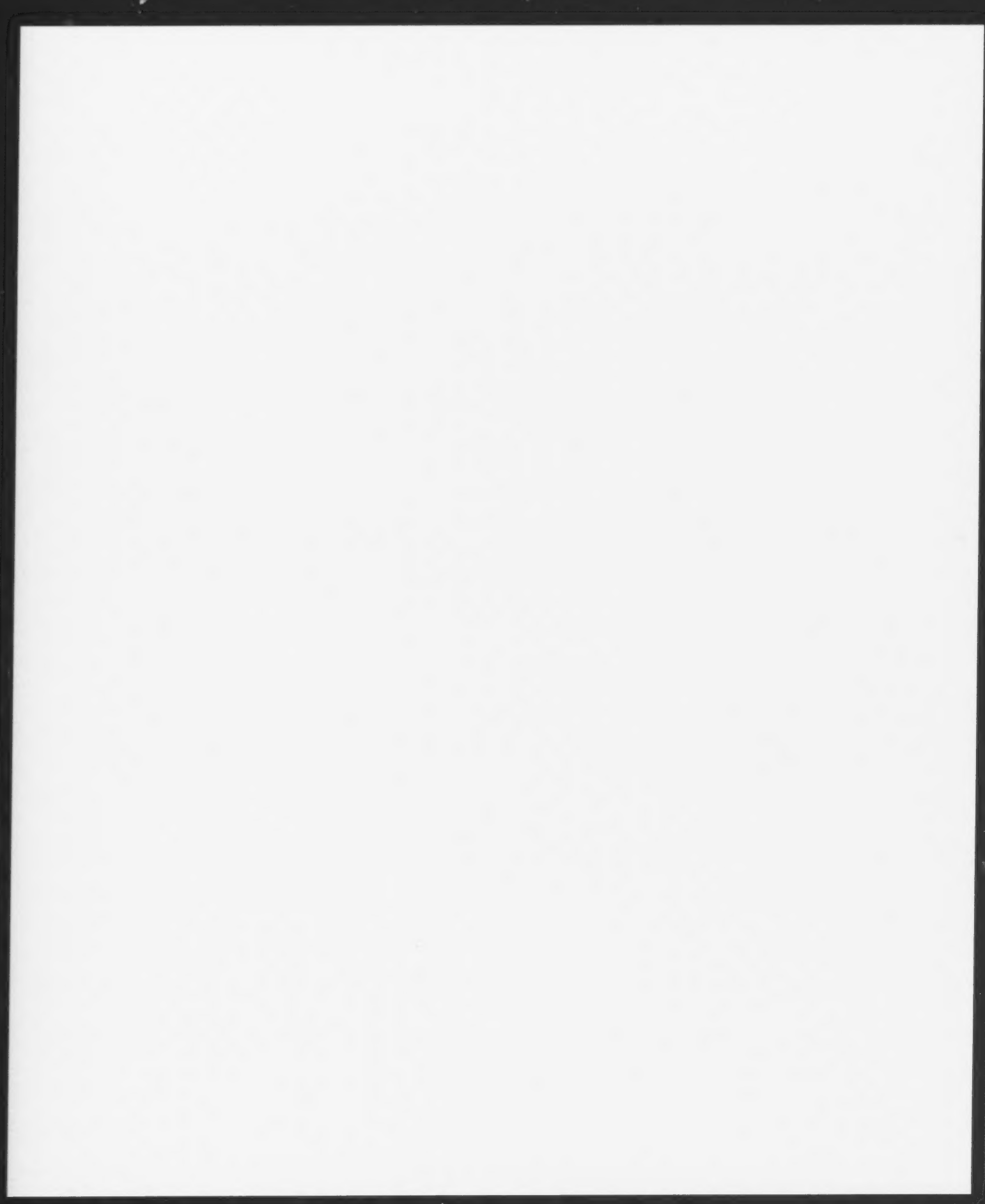
And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Pursuant to order made Tuesday, May 29, 2018, the division stands deferred until Tuesday, June 19, 2018 at the expiry of the time provided for oral questions.

It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the question to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment is the following: the hon. member for Saskatoon West, Housing.

[For continuation of proceedings, see part B]





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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Monday, June 18, 2018
(Part B)

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, June 18, 2018

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayer

[Continuation of proceedings from part A]

NATIONAL SECURITY ACT, 2017

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.) moved that Bill C-59, An Act respecting national security matters, be read the third time and passed.

He said: Mr. Speaker, as I open this final third reading debate on Bill C-59, Canada's new framework governing our national security policies and practices, I want to thank everyone who has helped to get us to this point today.

Historically, there were many previous studies and reports that laid the intellectual groundwork for Bill C-59. Justices Frank Iacobucci, John Major, and Dennis O'Connor led prominent and very important inquiries. There were also significant contributions over the years from both current and previous members of Parliament and senators. The academic community was vigorously engaged. Professors Forcese, Roach, Carvin, and Wark have been among the most constant and prolific of watchdogs, commentators, critics, and advisers. A broad collection of organizations that advocate for civil, human, and privacy rights have also been active participants in the process, including the Privacy Commissioner. We have heard from those who now lead or have led in the past our key national security agencies, such as the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, the RCMP, the Communications Security Establishment, the Canada Border Services Agency, Global Affairs Canada, the Privy Council Office, and many others. While not consulted directly, through their judgments and reports we have also had the benefit of guidance from the Federal Court of Canada, other members of the judiciary, and independent review bodies like the Security Intelligence Review Committee, and the commissioner for the Communications Security Establishment.

National security issues and concerns gained particular prominence in the fall of 2014, with the attacks in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu and here in Ottawa, which spawned the previous government's Bill C-51, and a very intense public debate.

During the election campaign that followed, we undertook to give Canadians the full opportunity to be consulted on national security, actually for the first time in Canadian history. We also promised to correct a specific enumerated list of errors in the old Bill C-51. Both of those undertakings have been fulfilled through the new bill, Bill C-59, and through the process that got us to where we are today.

Through five public town hall meetings across the country, a digital town hall, two national Twitter chats, 17 engagement events organized locally by members of Parliament in different places across the country, 14 in-person consultations with a broad variety of specific subject matter experts, a large national round table with civil society groups, hearings by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, and extensive online engagement, tens of thousands of Canadians had their say about national security like never before, and all of their contributions were compiled and made public for everyone else to see.

Based upon this largest and most extensive public consultation ever, Bill C-59 was introduced in Parliament in June of last year. It remained in the public domain throughout the summer for all Canadians to consider and digest.

Last fall, to ensure wide-ranging committee flexibility, we referred the legislation to the standing committee before second reading. Under the rules of the House, that provides the members on that committee with a broader scope of debate and possible amendment. The committee members did extensive work. They heard from three dozen witnesses, received 95 briefs, debated at length, and in the end made 40 different amendments.

● (1645)

The committee took what all the leading experts had said was a very good bill to start with, and made it better. I want to thank all members of the committee for their conscientious attention to the subject matter and their extensive hard work.

The legislation has three primary goals.

First, we sought to provide Canada with a modern, up-to-date framework for its essential national security activity, bearing in mind that the CSIS Act, for example, dates back to 1984, before hardly anyone had even heard of the information highway or of what would become the World Wide Web. Technology has moved on dramatically since 1984; so have world affairs and so has the nature of the threats that we are facing in terms of national security. Therefore, it was important to modify the law, to bring it up to date, and to put it into a modern context.

Second, we needed to correct the defects in the old Bill C-51, again, which we specifically enumerated in our 2015 election platform. Indeed, as members go through this legislation, they will see that each one of those defects has in fact been addressed, with one exception and that is the establishment of the committee of parliamentarians, which is not included in Bill C-59. It was included, and enacted by Parliament already, in Bill C-22.

Third, we have launched the whole new era of transparency and accountability for national security through review and oversight measures that are unprecedented, all intended to provide Canadians with the assurance that their police, security, and intelligence agencies are indeed doing the proper things to keep them safe while at the same time safeguarding their rights and their freedoms, not one at the expense of the other, but both of those important things together.

What is here in Bill C-59 today, after all of that extensive consultation, that elaborate work in Parliament and in the committees of Parliament, and the final process to get us to third reading stage? Let me take the legislation part by part. I noticed that in a ruling earlier today, the Chair indicated the manner in which the different parts would be voted upon and I would like to take this opportunity to show how all of them come together.

Part 1 would create the new national security and intelligence review agency. Some have dubbed this new agency a "super SIRC". Indeed it is a great innovation in Canada's security architecture. Instead of having a limited number of siloed review bodies, where each focused exclusively on one agency alone to the exclusion of all others, the new national security and intelligence review agency would have a government-wide mandate. It would be able to follow the issues and the evidence, wherever that may lead, into any and every federal department or agency that has a national security or intelligence function. The mandate is very broad. We are moving from a vertical model where they have to stay within their silo to a horizontal model where the new agency would be able to examine every department of government, whatever its function may be, with respect to national security. This is a major, positive innovation and it is coupled, of course, with that other innovation that I mentioned a moment ago: the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians created under Bill C-22. With the two of them together, the experts who would be working on the national security and intelligence review agency, and the parliamentarians who are already working on the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, Canadians can have great confidence that the work of the security, intelligence, and police agencies is being properly scrutinized and in a manner that befits the complexity of the 21st century.

• (1650)

This scrutiny would be for two key purposes: to safeguard rights and freedoms, yes absolutely, but also to ensure our agencies are functioning successfully in keeping Canadians safe and their country secure. As I said before, it is not one at the expense of the other, it is both of those things together, effectiveness coupled with the safeguarding of rights.

Then there is a new part in the legislation. After part 1, the committee inserted part 1.1 in Bill C-59, by adding the concept of a new piece of legislation. In effect, this addition by the committee would elevate to the level of legislation the practice of ministers issuing directives to their agencies, instructing them to function in such a manner as to avoid Canadian complicity in torture or mistreatment by other countries. In future, these instructions would be mandatory, not optional, would exist in the form of full cabinet orders in council, and would be made public. That is an important element of transparency and accountability that the committee built into the new legislation, and it is an important and desirable change. The ministerial directives have existed in the past. In fact, we have made them more vigorous and public than ever before, but part 1.1 would elevate this to a higher level. It would make it part of legislation itself, and that is the right way to go.

Part 2 of the new law would create the new role and function of the intelligence commissioner. For the first time ever, this would be an element of real time oversight, not just a review function after the fact. The national security and intelligence review agency would review events after they have happened. The intelligence commissioner would actually have a function to perform before activities are undertaken. For certain specified activities listed in the legislation, both the Canadian security intelligence agency and the Communications Security Establishment would be required to get the approval of the intelligence commissioner in advance. This would be brand new innovation in the law and an important element of accountability.

Part 3 of Bill C-59 would create stand-alone legislative authority for the Communications Security Establishment. The CSE has existed for a very long time, and its legislation has been attached to other legislation this Parliament has previously passed. For the first time now, the CSE would have its own stand-alone legal authorization in new legislation. As Canada's foreign signals intelligence agency, CSE is also our centre for cybersecurity expertise. The new legislation lays out the procedures and the protection around both defensive and active cyber-operations to safeguard Canadians. That is another reason it is important the CSE should have its own legal authorization and legislative form in a stand-alone act.

Part 4 would revamp the CSIS Act. As I mentioned earlier, CSIS was enacted in 1984, and that is a long time ago. In fact, this is the largest overall renovation of the CSIS legislation since 1984. For example, it would ensure that any threat reduction activities would be consistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It would create a modern regime for dealing with datasets, the collection of those datasets, the proper use of those datasets, and how they are disposed of after the fact. It would clarify the legal authorities of CSIS employees under the Criminal Code and other federal legislation. It would bring clarity, precision, and a modern mandate to CSIS for the first time since the legislation was enacted in 1984.

• (1655)

Part 5 of the bill would change the Security of Canada Information Sharing Act to the security of Canada information disclosure act. The reason for the wording change is to make it clear that this law would not create any new collection powers. It deals only with the sharing of existing information among government agencies and it lays out the procedure and the rules by which that sharing is to be done.

The new act will clarify thresholds and definitions. It will raise the standards. It will sharpen the procedures around information sharing within the government. It will bolster record keeping, both on the part of those who give the information and those who receive the information. It will clearly exempt, and this is important, advocacy and dissent and protest from the definition of activities that undermine national security. Canadians have wanted to be sure that their democratic right to protest is protected and this legislation would do so.

Part 6 would amend the Secure Air Travel Act. This act is the legislation by which Canada establishes a no-fly list. We all know the controversy in the last couple of years about false positives coming up on the no-fly list and some people, particularly young children, being prevented from taking flights because their name was being confused with the name of someone else. No child is on the Canadian no-fly list. Unfortunately, there are other people with very similar names who do present security issues, whose names are on the list, and there is confusion between the two names. We have undertaken to try to fix that problem. This legislation would establish the legal authority for the Government of Canada to collect the information that would allow us to fix the problem.

The other element that is required is a substantial amount of funding. It is an expensive process to establish a whole new database. That funding, I am happy to say, was provided by the Minister of Finance in the last budget. We are on our way toward fixing the no-fly list.

Part 7 would amend the Criminal Code in a variety of ways, including withdrawing certain provisions which have never been used in the pursuit of national security in Canada, while at the same time creating a new offence in language that would more likely be utilized and therefore more useful to police authorities in pursuing criminals and laying charges.

Part 8 would amend the Youth Justice Act for the simple purpose of trying to ensure that offences with respect to terrorism where

young people are involved would be handled under the terms of the Youth Justice Act.

Part 9 of the bill would establish a statutory review. That is another of the commitments we made during the election campaign, that while we were going to have this elaborate consultation, we were going to bring forward new legislation, we were going to do our very best to fix the defects in Bill C-51, and move Canada forward with a new architecture in national security appropriate to the 21st century.

We would also build into the law the opportunity for parliamentarians to take another look at this a few years down the road, assess how it has worked, where the issues or the problems might be, and address any of those issues in a timely way. In other words, it keeps the whole issue green and alive so future members of Parliament will have the chance to reconsider or to move in a different direction if they think that is appropriate. The statutory review is built into Part 9.

That is a summary of the legislation. It has taken a great deal of work and effort on the part of a lot of people to get us to this point today.

I want to finish my remarks with where I began a few moments ago, and that is to thank everyone who has participated so generously with their hard work and their advice to try to get this framework right for the circumstances that Canada has to confront in the 21st century, ensuring we are doing those two things and doing them well, keeping Canadians safe and safeguarding their rights and freedoms.

• (1700)

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister said that 36 witnesses appeared before the committee during its months-long study. One of them was Richard Fadden, the former national security advisor to the former and current prime ministers.

Mr. Fadden said that Bill C-59 was problematic because it was harder to understand and manage than the Income Tax Act. He said that the transfer of information seemed especially complicated.

Can the minister comment on Mr. Fadden's remarks? Does he agree with him? Is there still time to change things?

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity to discuss this legislation with Mr. Fadden, as well as the previous bill, Bill C-22, the committee of parliamentarians. In putting together this legislation, as with Bill C-22, I have had the opportunity also to benefit from his input and his good advice.

The issues we are dealing with here are complex and that does require a degree of complexity and sophistication in the legislation. However, I have every confidence with the talent that exists in our security, police, and intelligence agencies and with the resources that will be provided to those agencies that they will be able to do the jobs that we expect them to do, keeping Canadians safe, safeguarding rights and freedoms, and do that all, while they also account publicly to Canadians for their conduct and behaviour. There is no reason why the two have to be mutually exclusive.

• (1705)

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, certainly after hearing the minister go through the bill part by part, we just do not have time for in questions and comments, which I will do in my speech. However, there are three specific issues I want to raise with him.

The first is this talk of this big open and transparent process, notwithstanding the criticism that came from civil society about the government's green paper being too focused on giving law enforcement more flexibility and powers and not protecting rights and freedoms. The fact is that at committee nearly all those amendments were Liberal. Two NDP amendments were adopted, one because of a symbolic preamble. The other after agreeing to Liberal wording. Zero Conservatives and zero Green amendments were adopted. Therefore, when we talk about 55 amendments, it is important to put that into context.

Speaking of amendments, a lot of hay is being made of this great amendment the Liberals have adopted that codifies in law ministerial directives related to the information obtained under the use of torture. If the Liberals truly believe that this is not the right way to go, I want the minister to explain to me why his Liberal colleagues voted against my amendment that read as follows. The establishment in this case is CSE, and I presented similar amendments for other agencies, and it is prohibited from:

(a) disclosing information obtained in the performance of its duties and functions under this Act, or requesting information, if the disclosure or the request would subject an individual to a danger, believed on substantial grounds to exist, of mistreatment; or

(b) using information that is believed on reasonable grounds to have been obtained as a result of mistreatment of an individual.

(2) For the purposes of this section, mistreatment means torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment within the meaning of the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, signed at New York on December 10, 1984.

If the Liberals truly think that we, as Canadians, believe it is fundamentally unacceptable to obtain information or to use information obtained in the use of torture, why did the Liberals vote on the record, in recorded votes, against every amendment I had that would read exactly like that, explicitly prohibiting the use of torture? Why do they settle for ministerial directives?

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, as the legislation now says, they are no longer ministerial directives. In fact, after the passage of Bill C-59, and the inclusion of part 1.1, they become orders in council of the government in total, which has the full force and effect of the law.

The language was adopted the way it was to ensure that our police and security agencies would have the capacity to take action when they believed the lives of Canadians were at risk. If information

becomes available to CSIS or the RCMP, which they believe is credible, and indicates that the lives of Canadians are imminently in danger, Canadians would expect their government to authorize their security services to act on that information to save Canadian lives. That is why it is written the way it is.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to applaud the minister for his efforts in trying to pull everything together. When we sat on the opposition benches during the debate on Bill C-51, a great divide was being created. Canadians had serious concerns about their rights and freedoms. At the same time, there was the issue of wanting to feel safe in changing times.

Could the minister provide his thoughts on how important it was to strike the right balance? In particular, could he give some attention to a previous legislation he brought forward regarding the parliamentary standing committee that was there to protect the rights of Canadians?

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, so much of this discussion sometimes tends to get polarized, where the focus is either exclusively on one side of the equation or the other. Unfortunately, that happened in spades in the course of the last election campaign. There were some political voices arguing exclusively that the legislation needed to get tougher and other political voices arguing it needed to get weaker. Quite frankly, when we asked Canadians on the street, they said that they did not want either of those two options.

Canadians actually wanted both of those values together. They wanted to know that the legislation on national security and intelligence was good, strong legislation that gave our security agencies the tools they needed to keep Canadians safe. At the same time, they wanted transparency and accountability, and they wanted their rights and freedoms to be safeguarded. That was what we were looking for through the whole process of putting this legislation together, to get that mix right.

It was not so much a balance, because a balance implies a tradeoff, one against the other, and Canadians were saying that they wanted both together. They wanted us to give them legislation that would protect their rights and freedoms and at the same time keep them safe. On the basis of the vast majority of the input we received, I think we have the mix right and we achieve those two objectives simultaneously.

• (1710)

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his explanation of Bill C-59. My hon. colleague from the NDP indicated the number of amendments that were presented by various parties, very few of which were adopted by the Liberal majority at committee. However, the witnesses at committee expressed some concerns that with the current wording of the bill, there would be a tendency for the various security organizations inside the big umbrella of national security to be very protective of the information they had and to remain in silos and by remaining in those silos for fear of releasing information to another agency inside that big umbrella, they might run afoul of their political masters with a breach of privacy.

I am interested to have the minister's comments on whether he believes Bill C-59 strikes the right balance whereby agencies that receive information of threats to our country have full freedom to share that within the public service to other agencies without fear of releasing private information.

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, we have addressed that issue in two ways. First is by clarifying the rules within the Security of Canada Information Sharing Act to give more direction and more instruction to the agencies about how they properly share information, to try to get rid of the vagueness, to establish what the thresholds are, and to ensure it is being recorded and reported on both ends of the equation, those who are giving the information and those who are receiving it, to make the process more understandable by the people who are involved in it, and in fact producing a set of guidelines for how to share information properly.

The second step that is important is in the review process, under the umbrella of the national security and intelligence review agency. That review process has jurisdiction over all the agencies. It is not limited to one particular agency. It has the authority to examine the activities of every department and agency of the Government of Canada that has anything to do with national security or intelligence. That review process will be able to track very carefully whether and how information is being shared properly.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his speech.

On June 20, 2017, almost a year ago to the day, the minister introduced Bill C-59 in the House. Shortly after that, he said that, instead of bringing it back for second reading, it would be sent straight to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security so the committee could strengthen and improve it. Opposition members thought that was fantastic. We thought there would be no need for political games for once. Since this bill is about national security, we thought we could work together to ensure that Bill C-59 works for Canadians. When it comes to security, there is no room for partisanship.

Unfortunately, the opposition soon realized that it was indeed a political game. The work we were asked to do was essentially pointless. I will have more to say about that later.

The government introduced Bill C-71, the firearms bill, in much the same way. It said it would sever the gun-crime connection, but this bill does not even go there. The government is targeting hunters and sport shooters, but that is another story.

Getting back to Bill C-59, we were invited to propose amendments. We worked very hard. We got a lot of work done in just under nine months. We really took the time to go through this 250-page omnibus bill. We Conservatives proposed 45 specific amendments that we thought were important to improve Bill C-59, as the minister had asked us to do. In the end, none of our amendments were accepted by the committee or the government. Once again, we were asked to do a certain job, but then our work was dismissed, even though everything we proposed made a lot of sense.

The problem with Bill C-59, as far as we are concerned, is that it limits the Canadian Security Intelligence Service's ability to reduce terrorist threats. It also limits the ability of government departments to share data among themselves to protect national security. It removes the offence of advocating and promoting terrorist offences in general. Finally, it raises the threshold for obtaining a terrorism peace bond and recognizance with conditions. One thing has been clear to us from the beginning. Changing just two words in a 250-page document can sometimes make all the difference. What we found is that it will be harder for everyone to step in and address a threat.

The minister does indeed have a lot of experience. I think he has good intentions and truly wants this to work, but there is a prime minister above him who has a completely different vision and approach. Here we are, caught in a bind, with changes to our National Security Act that ultimately do nothing to enhance our security.

Our allies around the world, especially those in Europe, have suffered attacks. Bill C-51 was introduced in 2014, in response to the attacks carried out here, in Canada. Right now, we do not see any measures that would prevent someone from returning to the Islamic State. This is a problem. Our act is still in force, and we are having a hard time dealing with Abu Huzaifa, in Toronto. The government is looking for ways to arrest him—if that is what it truly wants to do—and now it is going to pass a law that will make things even harder for our security services. We are having a hard time with this.

Then there is the whole issue of radicalization. Instead of cracking down on it, the government is trying to put up barriers to preventing it. The funny thing is that at the time, when they were in the opposition, the current Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness and Prime Minister both voted with the government in favour of Bill C-51. There was a lot of political manoeuvring, and during the campaign, the Liberals said that they would address Bill C-51, a bill they had supported. At the time, it was good, effective counter-terrorism legislation. However, the Liberals listened to lobby groups and said during the campaign that they would amend it.

I understand the world of politics, being a part of it. However, there are certain issues on which we should set politics aside in the interest of national security. Our allies, the Five Eyes countries are working to enhance their security and to be more effective.

• (1715)

The message we want to get across is that adding more red tape to our structures makes them less operationally effective. I have a really hard time with that.

Let me share some examples of amendments we proposed to Bill C-59. We proposed an amendment requiring the minister to table in Parliament a clear description of the way the various organizations would work together, namely, the NSIC, CSE, CSIS, the new committee of parliamentarians, as well as the powers and duties of the minister.

In our meetings with experts, we noticed that people had a hard time understanding who does what and who speaks to whom. We therefore drafted an amendment that called on the minister to provide a breakdown of the duties that would be clear to everyone. The answer was no. The 45 amendments we are talking about were not all ideological in nature, but rather down to earth. The amendments were rejected.

It was the Conservative government that introduced Bill C-51 when it was in office. Before the bill was passed, the mandate of CSIS prevented it from engaging in any disruption activities. For example, CSIS could not approach the parents of a radicalized youth and encourage them to dissuade their child from travelling to a war zone or conducting attacks here in Canada. After Bill C-51 was passed, CSIS was able to engage in some threat disruption activities without a warrant and in others with a warrant. Threat disruption refers to efforts to stop terrorist attacks while they are still in the planning stages.

Threat disruption activities not requiring a warrant are understood to be any activities that are not contrary to Canadian laws. Threat disruption activities requiring a warrant currently include any activity that would infringe on an individual's privacy or other rights and any activity that contravenes Canada's laws. Any threat disruption activities that would cause bodily harm, violate sexual integrity, or obstruct justice are specifically prohibited.

Under Bill C-51, warrants were not required for activities that were not against Canadian law. Bill C-51 was balanced. No one could ask to intervene if it was against the law to do so. When there was justification, that worked, but if a warrant was required, one was applied for.

At present, Bill C-59 limits the threat reduction activities of CSIS to the specific measures listed in the bill. CSIS cannot employ these measures without a warrant. At present CSIS requires a warrant for these actions, which I will describe. First, a warrant is required to amend, remove, replace, destroy, disrupt, or degrade a communication or means of communication. Second, a warrant is also required to modify, remove, replace, destroy, degrade, or provide or interfere with the use or delivery of all or part of something, including files, documents, goods, components, and equipment.

The work was therefore complicated by the privacy objectives of Canadians. Bill C-51 created a privacy problem. Through careful analysis and comparison, it eventually became clear that the work CSIS was requesting was not in fact a privacy intrusion, as was believed. Even the privacy commissioners and witnesses did not analyze the situation the same way we are seeing now.

Bill C-51 made it easier to secure peace bonds in terrorism cases. Before Bill C-51, the legal threshold for police to secure a peace bond was that a person had to fear that another person will commit a terrorism offence.

Under Bill C-51, a peace bond could be issued if there were reasonable grounds to fear that a person might commit a terrorism offence. It is important to note that Bill C-59 maintains the lower of the two thresholds by using "may". However, Bill C-59 raises the threshold from "is likely" to "is necessary".

Earlier when I mentioned the two words that changed out of the 250 pages, I was referring to changing "is likely" to "is necessary". These two words make all the difference for preventing a terrorist activity, in order to secure a peace bond.

• (1720)

It would be very difficult to prove that a peace bond, with certain conditions, is what is needed to prevent an act of terrorism. This would be almost as complex as laying charges under the Criminal Code. What we want, however, is to get information to be able to act quickly to prevent terrorist acts.

We therefore proposed an amendment to the bill calling for a recognizance order to be issued if a peace officer believes that such an order is likely to prevent terrorist activities. The Liberals are proposing replacing the word "likely" with the words "is necessary". We proposed an amendment to eliminate that part of the bill, but it was refused. That is the main component of Bill C-59 with respect to managing national security.

Bill C-59 has nine parts. My NDP colleague wanted to split the bill, and I thought that was a very good idea, since things often get mixed up in the end. We are debating Bill C-59 here, but some parts are more administrative in nature, while others have to do with young people. Certain aspects need not be considered together. We believe that the administrative parts could have been included in other bills, while the more sensitive parts that really concern national security could have been dealt with publicly and separately.

Finally, the public and the media are listening to us, and Bill C-59 is an omnibus bill with so many elements that we cannot oppose it without also opposing some aspects that we support. For example, we are not against reorganizing the Communications Security Establishment. Some things could be changed, but we are not opposed to that.

We supported many of the bill's elements. On balance, however, it contains some legislation that is too sensitive and that we cannot support because it touches on fundamental issues. In our view, by tinkering with this, security operations will become very bureaucratic and communications will become difficult, despite the fact the the main goal was to simplify things and streamline operations.

The Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security heard from 36 witnesses, and several of them raised this concern. The people who work in the field every day said that it complicated their lives and that this bill would not simplify things. A huge structure that looks good on paper was put in place, but from an operational point of view, things have not been simplified.

Ultimately, national security is what matters to the government and to the opposition. I would have liked the amendments that we considered important to be accepted. Even some administrative amendments were rejected. We believe that there is a lack of good faith on the part of the government on this file. One year ago, we were asked to work hard and that is what we did. The government did not listen to us and that is very disappointing.

• (1725)

Mr. Michel Picard (Montarville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure of working with my colleague on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. However, is he not getting a police state confused with the rule of law?

The limits he alluded to, such as requiring a warrant, are already enforced in criminal investigations. Since my colleague talked about limits, would he rather call into question the rights and freedoms that we fight so hard to protect, in favour of a witch hunt to seek out any information?

Instead, the proposed measures will help the CSE legally carry out offensive and defensive operations with integrity, and with access to better tools.

Is my colleague questioning the professionalism of the agents using these tools?

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I would never, ever, question the work being done by our CSIS and RCMP security officers. They are qualified professionals. There should not be any question about that. I will not allow it. What we are asking for is for these agencies to have the freedom to work effectively, since at the end of the day, it is the safety of Canadians that is at stake.

Yes, individual freedoms are important. I agree with everyone on that. We are playing around with words here, and words are important in a bill. I do not want a changed word to increase the risk of an attack because our officers were not able to intervene in time, all because the government wanted to play politics with the words. As the minister mentioned earlier, we need to find a balance between rights and security. We thought there was a balance, but the government thinks a change is needed. We simply have different ideas of what a balance means, but we are all focused on keeping Canadians safe.

• (1730)

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. The problem that I have with the Conservatives' approach is that it minimizes the potential impact of the fight against radicalization and it minimizes the fact that ISIS is taking advantage of vulnerable young people. Rather than offering assistance, the Conservatives tried to minimize the importance of those efforts. They did away with the police recruitment fund, they took away all the public safety resources, and then they tried to use incidents that occurred around the world to justify expanding the legislative powers of our national security agencies. However, CSIS

exists because a distinction needs to be made between the work of the police and that of intelligence agencies.

Bill C-51 gave CSIS threat disruption powers. That issue remains despite the bill's attempts at making some small improvements, all of which sadly amount to nothing at all given the potential for the human rights of Canadians being violated. On professors Carvin and Force's podcast entitled "Intrepid", Bob Paulson, who as my colleague knows is a former RCMP commissioner, said that he was concerned about CSIS being given that type of power because that type of power belongs to the police.

Does my colleague agree with that? Why not focus on giving the police the tools they need to do their job rather than legislating to give CSIS powers that defeat the very purpose for which it was created?

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. I will come back to the very current example of Abu Huzafa. We learned about him and what he did from an interview he gave to the *New York Times*. People from CSIS quickly descended on Toronto to question him and he laughed in their faces. How is it that an individual like him, who engaged in jihad, who admitted to killing people, who has committed known atrocities, came back to Toronto and gave an interview to the *New York Times*?

When we talk about opportunities for obtaining intelligence, it is for that type of individual. We do not want to harm the average, hard-working Canadian who minds their own business. It is because of people like Abu Huzafa that we want to be sure to have the tools we need to be able to intervene on time. CSIS does intelligence work and has the means. I understand that it is not the same as police work. The police has its own job, but CSIS has to act on this type of situation quickly with the means that we gave them at the time.

Mr. Michel Picard: Mr. Speaker, I would like to know whether my colleague agrees that some of their recommendations, which were certainly the fruit of some very hard work, would be more useful in regulations than in the act itself.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, that is a good question. That is part of what I was saying about the omnibus Bill C-59. It has nine separate parts. Some parts are more administrative, and others are more related to the operational side of things. That is what makes this whole business more complicated. A year ago, we were asked to study this bill and work on it. It was a struggle for us to figure out how to make our work relevant. Our recommendations did include some amendments that were more operational and some that were more administrative, but that was because the bill itself was crafted that way.

[English]

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague presented some good information on the flaws of this bill.

One of the issues we have had with the government is it seems to equate announcements with actions. We have seen it again and again, and we are seeing it again with the Minister of Public Safety's departmental plan, which is supposed to lay out his priorities for the year. It states that the government is going to implement renewed cybersecurity with significant new funding in the budget. I repeat, significant new funding. However, when we look at the main estimates for the year, which, of course, are now fully aligned with the budget, there is only \$1.7 million of new funding.

Does \$1.7 million seem like significant new funding for something as important as fighting cybersecurity?

• (1735)

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his question about cybersecurity. Just recently, a week or two ago, the Minister of Defence, accompanied by the Minister of Public Safety, made a public announcement about some new strategies. The strategy is a relash of a Conservative strategy from 2013. It also misunderstands Canada's needs, which are significant, given everything that is currently going on with China and Russia. I hope the government will take the necessary steps to ensure that it is very effective with regard to cybersecurity. Right now, there are 200,000 Chinese hackers working ceaselessly to exploit flaws in security systems around the world. That is a lot of people.

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Belœil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their speeches. Here we are again, debating Bill C-59 at third reading, and I would like to start by talking about the process of debate surrounding a bill, which started not with this government, but rather during the last Parliament with the former Bill C-51.

Contrary to what we have been hearing from the other side today and at other times as well, the NDP and the Green Party were the only ones that opposed Bill C-51 in the previous Parliament. I have heard many people talk about how they were aware that Canadians had concerns about their security, about how a balanced approach was vital, and about how they understood the bill was flawed. They took it for granted that they would come to power and then fix the many, many, many flaws in the bill. Some of those flaws are so dangerous that they threaten the rights, freedoms, and privacy of Canadians. Of course, I am talking about the Liberal Party, which supported Bill C-51 even as it criticized it. I remember that when it was before committee, the member for Malpeque, who is still an MP, spend his time criticizing it and talking about its flaws. Then the Liberal Party supported it anyway.

That is problematic because now the government is trying to use the bill to position itself as the champion of nuanced perspectives. The government keeps trying to say that there are two objectives, namely to protect Canadians and to protect Canadians' rights. I myself remember a rather different situation, which developed in the wake of the 2014 attack on Parliament. The Conservative government tried to leverage people's fear following that terrible

event to make unnecessary legislative changes. I will comment further on what was really necessary to protect Canadians.

A legislative change was therefore proposed to increase the powers given to national security agencies, but nothing was done to enhance the oversight system, which already falls short of where it needs to be to ensure that their work is done in full compliance with our laws and in line with Canadians' expectations regarding their rights and freedoms. Surveys showed that Canadians obviously welcomed those measures because, after all, we were in a situation where ISIS was on the rise, and we had the attack in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, which is not far from my region. We also had the attack right here in Parliament. They took advantage of people's fear, so there was some support for the measures presented in the bill.

To the NDP, our reflection in caucus made it very clear that we needed to stand up. We are elected to this place not only to represent our constituents, but also to be leaders on extremely difficult issues and to make the right decision, the decision that will ensure that we protect the rights of Canadians, even when that does not appear to be a popular decision.

• (1740)

[English]

Despite the fact that it seemed to be an unpopular decision, and despite the fact that the Liberals, seeing the polls, came out saying "We are just going to go with the wind and try and denounce the measures in the bill so that we can simultaneously protect ourselves from Conservative attacks and also try and outflank the NDP on the progressive principled stand of protecting Canadians' rights and freedoms," what happened? The polls changed. As the official opposition, we fought that fight here in Parliament. Unlike the Liberals, we stood up to Stephen Harper's draconian Bill C-51. We saw Canadians overwhelmingly oppose the measures that were in Bill C-51.

What happened after the election? We saw the Liberals try to square the circle they had created for themselves by denouncing and supporting legislation all at the same time. They said not to worry, because they were going to do what they do best, which is to consult. They consulted on election promises and things that were already debated in the previous Parliament.

The minister brought forward his green paper. The green paper was criticized, correctly and rightfully so, for going too far in one direction, for posing the question of how we could give more flexibility to law enforcement, how we could give them more tools to do their jobs, which is a complete misunderstanding of the concerns that Canadians had with Bill C-51 to begin with. It goes back to the earlier point I made. Instead of actually giving law enforcement the resources to create their tools, having a robust anti-radicalization strategy, and making sure that we do not see vulnerable young people falling through the cracks and being recruited by terrorist organizations like ISIS or the alt right that we see in these white supremacist groups, what happened?

We embarked on this consultation that was already going in one direction, and nearly two years after the Liberals coming into power, we finally see legislation tabled. The minister, in his speech earlier today, defended tabling that legislation in the dying days of a spring sitting of Parliament before the House rises for the summer by saying that we would have time to consider and contemplate the legislation over the summer. He neglected to mention that the very same powers that stood on shaky constitutional ground that were accorded to agencies like CSIS by the Conservatives' Bill C-51 remain on the books, and as Michel Coulombe, the then director of CSIS, now retired, said repeatedly in committee, they are powers that were being used at that time.

It is all well and good to consult. Certainly, no one is opposed to the principles behind consultation, but when the consultation is about promises that were made to the Canadian people to fix legislation that undermined their rights while the very powers that undermined their rights are still on the books and being used, then one has to recognize the urgency to act.

[Translation]

The story continues because after this consultation the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security conducted a consultation. We made recommendations and the NDP prepared an excellent supplementary report, which supports the committee's unanimous recommendations, but also includes our own, in support of the bill introduced by my colleague from Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, which is on the Order Paper. He was the public safety critic before me and he led the charge, along with the member for Outremont, who was then the leader of the official opposition, against Bill C-51. The bill introduced by my colleague from Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke entirely repeals all of the legislation in Bill C-51.

Interestingly, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness defended the fact that he did not repeal it all by stating that several MPs, including the member for Spadina—Fort York, said that the reason not to do so was that it would be a highly complex legislative endeavour. My colleague introduced a bill that is on the Order Paper and that does exactly that. With due respect to my colleague, it cannot be all that complex if we were able to draft a bill that achieved those exact objectives.

Bill C-59 was sent to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security before second reading, on the pretext that this would make it possible to adopt a wider range of amendments, give the opposition more opportunities to be heard, and allow for a robust

study. What was the end result? A total of 55 amendments were adopted, and we are proud of that. However, of those 55 amendments, two come from the NDP, and one of those relates to the preamble to one part of the bill. While I have no desire to impugn the Liberals' motives, the second amendment was adopted only once the wording met their approval. None of the Conservatives' amendments were adopted. Ultimately, it is not the end of the world, because we disagree on several points, but I hear all this talk about collaboration, yet none of the Green Party's amendments were adopted. This goes to show that the process was rigged and that the government had already decided on its approach.

• (1745)

[English]

The government is going to brag about the new part 1.1 of the legislation that has been adopted. Contrary to what the minister said when answering my question earlier today in debate, that would not create any new legal obligation in terms of how the system currently works. The ministerial directives that are adopted to prohibit—despite loopholes, it is important to note—the use of information obtained under torture will remain just that, ministerial directives. The legal obligation that the minister or the Governor in Council “may” recommend the issuing of directives to deputy heads of departments is just not good enough. If it were, the Liberals would have had no problem voting for amendments that I read into record at committee. Time does not permit me to reread the amendments into the record, but I read them into the record in my question for the minister. The amendments would have explicitly and categorically prohibited acquiring, using, or, in way, shape, or form, interacting with information, from a public safety perspective, that may have been obtained under the use of torture. That is in keeping with our obligations under international law conventions that Canada has signed on to.

On a recorded vote, on every single one of those amendments, every member of the committee, Liberal and Conservative alike, voted against them. I invite Canadians to look at that record, and I invite Canadians to listen to what the minister said in response to me. When public safety may be at risk, there is no bigger admission that they are open to using information obtained under the use of torture than saying that they want to keep the flexibility when Canadians are at risk. Let Canadians be assured that it has been proven time and again that information obtained under the use of torture is of the most unreliable sort. It not only does nothing to protect Canadians and ensure public safety, but most of the time it does the opposite, by leading law enforcement on wild goose chases with erroneous information that could put their lives at risk, and Canadian lives at risk, not to mention the abhorrent and flagrant breach of human rights here and elsewhere through having those types of provisions. Therefore, I will let the Liberals explain why they voted against those amendments to explicitly prohibit torture, and why they feel that standing on ministerial directives and words like “may”, that are anything but binding, is good enough.

[Translation]

The Minister of Public Safety loves to boast that he has the support of various experts, and I have the utmost respect for those experts. I took the process in committee very seriously. I tried to unpack the extremely complex elements of the bill.

My Conservative colleague mentioned the Chair's decision to apply Standing Order 69.1. In my opinion, separating the votes on the different elements of the bill amounts to an acknowledgement that it is indeed an omnibus bill. A former director of CSIS, who served as a national security advisor to Prime Minister Harper and the current Prime Minister, said that the bill was beginning to rival the Income Tax Act in terms of complexity. Furthermore, several witnesses were forced to limit their testimony to just one part of the bill. In addition, elements were added concerning the Communications Security Establishment, or CSE, and those elements fall within the scope of national defence, yet they were never mentioned during the consultations held by the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security or by the Minister of Public Safety.

Before anyone jumps on me, I want to say that we realize the CSE's statutory mandate needs to be updated. We recognize that cybersecurity threats exist. However, when a government rains something through, as the government is doing with Bill C-59, we end up with flawed definitions, in particular with respect to the information available to the public, and with vague allocation of powers. Furthermore, the government is already announcing the position of a director of a new centre that is being created, under which everything will be consolidated, even though the act that is set out in the budget and, according to the minister, should be introduced this fall, has not yet been introduced.

This bill has many parts. The committee heard from some impressive experts, including professors Carvin, Forcese, and Wark, authors of some very important and interesting briefs, all of which are well thought out and attempt to break down all of the complicated aspects of the bill, including the ones I just mentioned. In their columns in *The Globe and Mail*, they say that some parts of the bill are positive and others require a more in-depth study. One of these parts has to do with information sharing.

• (1750)

Information sharing was one of the most problematic aspects of Bill C-51.

[English]

Information sharing is recognized by the experts whom the minister touts as those supporting his legislation, by civil liberties associations and others, as one of the most egregious elements of what was Bill C-51, and that is changed only in a cosmetic way in this legislation.

We changed "sharing" to "disclosure", and what does that mean? When there are consequential amendments to changing "disclosure" everywhere else in all of these acts, it does not change anything. All experts recognize that. The problematic information-sharing regime that was brought in, which is a threat to Canadians' rights and freedoms, still exists.

If we want to talk about what happened to Maher Arar, the Liberals voted down one of my amendments to include Global Affairs as one of the governmental departments that Canadians could make a complaint about to the new review agency. Yet, when it comes to consular services, when it comes to human rights breaches happening to Canadians abroad, Global Affairs and consular services have a role to play, especially when we see stories in the news of

CSIS undermining efforts of consular affairs to get Canadians out of countries with horrible human rights records and back here.

This has all fallen on deaf ears. The information-sharing regime remains in place. The new powers given to CSE, in clause 24, talk about how CSE has the ability to collect. Notwithstanding the prohibition on it being able to collect information on Canadians, it can, for the sake of research and other things, and all kinds of ill-defined terms, collect information on the information infrastructure related to Canadians.

Incidentally, as a matter of fact, it voted down my amendments to have a catch-and-release provision in place for information acquired incidentally on Canadians. What does that do? When we read clause 24 of part 3 of the bill related to CSE, it says that it is for the purposes of "disclosing". Not only are they now exempt from the explicit prohibition that they normally have in their mandate, they can also disclose.

What have the Liberals done to the information-sharing regime brought in by the Conservatives under Bill C-51? It is called "disclosure" now. Members can do the math. We are perpetuating this regime that exists.

[Translation]

I know my time is very limited, so I want to address the issue of threat disruption by CSIS. As I said in my questions to my Conservative colleague, the very reason CSIS exists is that disruption is a police duty. As a result, leaving the power to disrupt threats granted in former Bill C-51 in the hands of CSIS still goes against the mandate of CSIS and its very purpose, even if the current government is making small improvements to the constitutionality of those powers. That is unacceptable.

I am not alone in saying this. As I said in my questions to my Conservative colleagues, I am talking about the excellent interview with former RCMP commissioner Paulson. He was interviewed by Professors Carvin and Forcese on their podcast. That interview raised concerns about that power.

In closing, I would like to talk about solutions. After all, I did begin my remarks by saying that we do not want to increase the legislative powers, which we believe are already sufficient. I am talking here about Bill C-51, which was introduced in the previous Parliament. We need to look at resources for police officers, which were cut by the previous government. The Conservatives eliminated the police recruitment fund, which allowed municipalities and provinces to recruit police officers and improve police services in their jurisdictions. I am thinking in particular of the Montreal police, or SPVM, and the Eclipse squad, which dealt with street gangs. It was a good thing the Government of Quebec was there to fill the gap left by the elimination of the funding that made it possible for the squad to exist. The current government is making some efforts in the fight against radicalization, but it needs to do more. The Conservatives are dumping on and ridiculing those efforts. The radicalization that we are seeing on social media and elsewhere targets vulnerable young people. Ridiculing and minimizing the government's efforts undermines the public safety objectives that we need to achieve.

• (1755)

We cannot support a bill that so deeply undermines the protection of Canadians' rights and privacy. Despite what they claim across the way, this bill does nothing to protect the safety of Canadians, which, let us be clear, is an objective all parliamentarians want to achieve. However, achieving that objective must not be done to the detriment of rights and freedoms, as was the case under the previous government and as is currently still the case with this bill.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the member was in the official opposition a number of years ago, and we were the third party at the time, there was a fairly significant debate that took place with respect to Bill C-51. Our Prime Minister made it very clear to Canadians, unlike the New Democrats, that we saw merit in Bill C-51. However, the commitment was that if we were elected, we would fix Bill C-51. There has been a great deal of consultation in every region of our country. There are two pieces of legislation, this one being the second part of it, that deals with and brings an end to Bill C-51. It fulfills an election platform commitment by this Prime Minister.

My question to my friend and colleague across the way is this. Does he recognize, and I am sure he does, that the NDP amendments went absolutely nowhere when Stephen Harper was Prime Minister? He might not like it, but it is quite possible that there were some problems with the amendments that the NDP were proposing. The point is this. Does he not agree that this is a commitment that the Liberal Party made in the last election, and that this legislation, in good part, is fulfilling that commitment?

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Mr. Speaker, if the member has a problem with the validity or the quality of the NDP amendments, he can take it up with the folks who offered us the exact wording we used, like the BC Civil Liberties Association, the Citizen Lab at Munk School at the University of Toronto, or Jean-Pierre Plouffe, who is the current commissioner of the CSE, and who will likely fill the role of the intelligence commissioner created by this legislation, or the RCMP Civilian Review and Complaints Commission. These are the organizations from which we took the wording that we used in our amendments. Therefore, on that front, I am very comfortable with the quality of the amendments, because they come from esteemed experts and folks who are fighting the good fight in civil society.

That being said, if I were to give the Liberals a report card on this issue, they would get two failures. The first failure is with respect to leadership in the previous Parliament. They were spineless with respect to Bill C-51 when the previous government brought in that draconian legislation. They can have all the revisionist history they want, but the reality is that real leadership is standing up for Canadian rights and freedoms. That is not what they did in the last Parliament. In conclusion, the second failure is with respect to what they have done with this legislation, which does nothing to fix any of the problems. Therefore, there was a failure to show leadership and to fix the problems that they allowed to happen in the first place.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, because he saw what the Liberals just attempted to do. The parliamentary secretary said the fact that the Liberals did not accept any of the substantive amendments from

the NDP must mean that the amendments were wrong. That is, until the NDP was able to source where those amendments came from, which are the leading security and human rights experts, people from both the security establishments, and those who are looking to defend the rights of Canadians.

We all watched the fiasco of the Liberals in the last Parliament under Bill C-51 and the leadership of the current Prime Minister. They thought they could get away with just voting for the thing. The backlash that came their way caused the Liberals to introduce this *mea culpa*. They said that if they were elected, they would undo Bill C-51, which was a transgression, on multiple levels, of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Liberal Party wraps itself in the charter as often as it can—it is like a comforting blanket for it—except when it comes time to defending the charter.

My question for my friend is this. Of the significant damage done under Bill C-51 by the Harper government, supported by the Liberals at the time, what are the main things that will continue to exist if this bill were to pass and become law? What are the main contentions and concerns around privacy and human rights under Canadian law that will remain on the books under this Liberal leadership?

• (1800)

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more arrogant than justifying a position by saying, "Don't worry, elect us, and we'll fix it", because at the end of the day, taking a principled stand is not about what one will be able to do after one hopes to be elected. It is about standing up in the face of the very problems that are before us. That is what the then leader of the official opposition, the member for Outremont, did.

The fact is this. The Liberals have constantly, over the last number of years that I have been a parliamentarian, used the word "balance", despite all the experts saying that it is not about balance, because balance means we are taking away from one side or the other: public safety and protecting rights and freedoms. I stood in the House and said that balance means that we are taking away from one or the other. What did I hear the minister say? He said those exact words today. The Liberals certainly like the NDP approach. I wish we would see it more in this legislation.

Let me get to the substance of my colleague's question. What is still on the books from Bill C-51 in this legislation? There is rampant information sharing between agencies that threatens Canadians' rights and freedoms, threat-reduction powers for CSIS that go against the very reason CSIS was created in the first place, and separating intelligence gathering and law enforcement.

Not only that, the Liberals have added new breaches of Canadians' privacy and rights and freedoms by expanding CSE's powers without sufficient accountability, despite our being happy with new accountability. There are poor definitions of "publicly available information" and offensive cyber-operations. What do these things mean? There are a lot of unanswered questions. They were unanswered at committee. They remain unanswered.

Unfortunately, the government is plowing ahead, despite the fact that these serious concerns have been raised by numerous people, such as the folks I mentioned who helped us craft the amendments we proposed that seemingly were not good enough for the Liberals.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed in my colleague across the way. No matter what, they have their narrative, and that is the narrative they are going to stick to. They do not let the truth confuse them.

Let me give the House a specific example of exactly what the member just said. He said that the Minister of Public Safety said that it was all about balance. The member does not quite understand why the minister said it is about balance. From an NDP perspective, it is not about balance, because there is give and take. I listened to what the Minister of Public Safety said. He said it was not strictly about balance; it is about getting the right mix. That is what the minister actually said. That member accused the Minister of Public Safety of being all about balance.

The NDP members do not have an open mind. They have a closed mind with respect to this issue. They are still sore from the last federal election, quite frankly.

Canadians understand that there needs to be the right mix in dealing with their safety and their privacy rights. We are the party of the charter. I will wrap myself around the Charter of Rights. I am proud of the fact that it was a Liberal government that brought in the charter.

I wonder if my colleague across the way would withdraw his comments about the mix, because the Minister of Public Safety made it clear that it was about getting the right mix, contrary to what the member just finished saying.

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Mr. Speaker, my colleague perhaps misheard me, because I specifically said that the minister always talks about balance, and funnily enough, after I made a speech the last time we debated this legislation, I am suddenly hearing exactly what our position has always been being restated.

Here is the thing. I do not want Canadians to let the Liberals' Goldilocks approach fool them. The member said that we have a closed mind. Let me tell him one thing. When it comes to legislation that attacks Canadians' rights and freedoms and their privacy, and when it comes to the voting done on amendments to specifically prohibit the use of information obtained under the use of torture, the member is darn right that I will always have a closed mind, and so will all New Democrats.

• (1805)

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, let us continue this alleged debate with my friend from Winnipeg about this specific question. Let me get this straight. Did the NDP move an amendment that said that the Canadian government must not take and use information either directly through torture or that has been provided through torture, and the Liberals voted against it?

We just heard a rambling speech from the Liberal member saying how much they love the charter. The charter strictly prohibits the use of information from torture. We tried to put that into the bill that specifically looks at this issue. My colleague sat on the committee. He heard from witnesses. I would like him to remind us what the Liberals did when they had the option to actually defend the charter rather than just talk about it. What was it the Liberals did on the committee, and now in the House of Commons, with respect to

human rights and the use of torture and information garnered from torture?

[Translation]

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

That is precisely the problem. We adopted a Liberal amendment that says that the minister can issue directives. It is an amendment that I supported because of course we are very pleased to see these principles listed in the legislation. That said, the fact remains that the NDP amendments that specifically and explicitly sought to prohibit the use of information that may have been obtained through torture were defeated by the Liberals and the Conservatives. I invite Canadians to go look at the committee minutes. It is all there.

The other thing we have to acknowledge is that when we talk about protecting Canadians' rights and freedoms and when we talk about the charter, we are all on the same page and we invite our colleagues to support amendments to do just that. Unfortunately, that did not happen. Ultimately, we have to acknowledge yet again that there is still no room for that kind of openness. It was the minister who said that we need to remain flexible for some information that might protect public safety. To the NDP, when the information is obtained through torture, there should be no flexibility at all.

[English]

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage (Multiculturalism), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Oakville North—Burlington this evening.

I rise today to speak in support of Bill C-59. With this bill, our government is entrenching our commitment to balancing the primacy of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms with protecting our national security. We are enhancing accountability and transparency. We are correcting the most problematic elements of the Harper government's old Bill C-51.

Our government conducted an unprecedented level of public consultation with Canadians about our national security in order to effectively develop the bill. Canadians told us loudly and clearly that they wanted a transparent, accountable, and effective national security framework. That is exactly what we will accomplish with Bill C-59.

The minister took the rare step of referring Bill C-59 to the Standing Committee on Public Safety after first reading, underscoring our government's commitment to Canadians to ensure that we got this important legislation right. Prior to the bill returning to this chamber, it underwent an extensive four-month study, hearing from nearly 100 witnesses. I would like to thank the members of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security for their hard work in studying the bill extensively and for their comprehensive report.

Fundamental to our promise to bring our national security framework into the 21st century, we are fixing the very flawed elements of the old Bill C-51, which I heard so much about from my constituents in Parkdale—High Park during the 2015 electoral campaign.

I am proud to support this evidence-based, balanced legislation, and I am reassured to see positive reactions from legal and national security experts right around the country, including none other than Professors Craig Forcese and Kent Roach, two of the foremost legal academics in Canada who have been at the centre of concerns about the overreach of the Harper government's old Bill C-51.

Professors Forcese and Roach have said, "Bill C-59 is the biggest overhaul in Canadian national security since the creation of the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS) in 1984—and it gets a lot of things right."

Bill C-59 builds on our commitment to enhance accountability, which started with our government's introduction of Bill C-22 in 2016. Bill C-22, which has received royal assent established an all-party committee of parliamentarians, representatives elected by the Canadian public, to review and critically analyze security and intelligence activities. For the first time in history, a multi-party group of members of this chamber as well as the Senate are now holding Canada's security apparatus to account.

We are building on Bill C-22 with the current bill, Bill C-59, which would establish a national security and intelligence review agency. The NSIRA, as it would be known, would function as a new expert review body with jurisdiction across the entire government to complement the efforts of the recently established parliamentary oversight committee, which I just mentioned. This feature would incorporate one of the important recommendations of the Maher Arar inquiry, which called on the government to, and I am citing recommendation 16 from the Maher Arar inquiry, "develop a protocol to provide for coordination and coherence across government in addressing issues that arise" respecting national security.

With the establishment of a parliamentary oversight committee in Bill C-22, and a new arm's-length review body in Bill C-59, we would be addressing the glaring gap that exists in our review bodies for national security agencies. Currently, some agencies do not have a review body or are in charge of reviewing themselves. We cannot allow the lack of such fundamental oversight to continue, especially with regard to the safety and security of Canadians.

As Professors Forcese and Roach have observed, with respect to Bill C-59:

the government is finally redressing the imbalance between security service powers and those of the review bodies that are supposed to hold them to account. Bill C-59 quite properly supplements the parliamentary review committee...with a reformed expert watchdog entity. Expert review will be liberated from its silos as the new review agency has a whole-of-government mandate.

This is a critical piece in our government's work, providing my constituents in Parkdale—High Park and indeed Canadians right around this country, with a comprehensive and responsible national security framework.

● (1810)

[Translation]

In addition to establishing the NSIRA, Bill C-59 calls for increased and improved communication between this organization and other relevant review bodies, such as the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada. This will not only boost efficiency and avoid duplication and unnecessary use of resources, but also

promote a more holistic approach to protecting privacy and security at the federal level.

[English]

While speaking with the residents of Parkdale—High Park in 2015, I heard about the Harper government's old Bill C-51 over and over again at the doors. The major concern the residents expressed to me was about the threat posed by the previous government's Bill C-51 to their constitutional rights and freedoms. The residents of my community are an intelligent and engaged group of citizens, and they were on to something. The federal government, under the guise of "public security", cannot be permitted to infringe on the rights and freedoms that are fundamental to our very society, to what it means to be Canadian.

Yes, ensuring public safety is the pre-eminent responsibility of any government, but it is simply not acceptable to pursue security at any cost. My constituents, and indeed all Canadians, expect a government that respects fundamental constitutional rights, a government that will put in place mechanisms and safeguards to protect those rights.

That is precisely what Bill C-59 would achieve. How? First, it would tighten the definition of what constitutes "terrorist propaganda". The narrower and more targeted definition would ensure that the sacrosanct protection of freedom of expression under section 2(b) of our charter is observed, and that our security laws in Canada are not so overreaching as to limit legitimate critique and debate.

Second, as a corollary to this point, Bill C-59 would also protect the right of all Canadians to legitimate protest and advocacy. One of the most searing criticisms of the Harper government's old Bill C-51 was that bona fide protestors who dared to disagree with the government of the day could be caught up in a web of security sweeps, all in the name of public safety.

That is not how our Liberal government operates. We respect the charter and the right of all Canadians to engage in legitimate protest and advocacy, whether they represent a group with charitable status that opposes a government policy, or a gathering of students on a university campus who take up the call for more aggressive investment of federal funds to support the expansion of women's rights internationally.

That kind of advocacy is not a threat to our public security. To the contrary, it is an enhancement of our democracy. It is civil society groups and public citizens doing exactly what they do best, challenging government to do, and to be, better.

In Bill C-59, we recognize this principle. We are saying to Canadians that they have constitutional rights to free speech and protest, and that we are going to affirm and protect those rights by correcting the balance between protecting safety and respecting the charter.

Third, Bill C-59 would also upgrade procedures as they relate to the no-fly list. We know that the no-fly list is an important international mechanism for keeping people safe, but its use has expanded to the point of encroaching on Canadians' rights. In Bill C-59, we are determined to address this imbalance.

Our changes to the no-fly list regime would do the following. They would require the destruction of information provided to the minister about a person who was, or was expected to be, on board an aircraft within seven days following the departure or cancellation of the flight. It would also authorize the minister to collect information from individuals for the purpose of issuing a unique identifier to them to assist with pre-flight verification of their identity.

This is a critical step that would provide us with the legislative tools needed to develop a domestic redress mechanism. The funding for a domestic redress mechanism was delivered by our government this year, specifically \$81.4 million in budget 2018. However, in order to start investing this money in a way that would allow Canadians, including children, who are false positives on the no-fly list to seek redress, we need legislative authority. Bill C-59 would provide that legislative authority.

Finally, with Bill C-59 we would re-establish the paramountcy of the charter. I speak now as a constitutional lawyer who practised in this area for 15 years prior to being elected. It is unfortunate that the paramountcy of the Constitution needs to be entrenched in law. As a lawyer, I know, and we should all know, that the Constitution is always the paramount document against which all other laws are measured. Nevertheless, the previous government's disdain for the charter has made this important step necessary.

Through Bill C-59, we would entrench, in black and white, that any unilateral action by CSIS to collect data in a manner that might infringe on the Constitution is no longer permitted. Instead, under Bill C-59, any such proposals would have to come before a judge, who must evaluate the application in accordance with the law, where protecting charter rights would be the paramount concern. Our party helped establish the charter in 1982, and our government stands behind that document and all the values and rights it protects.

As I and many others have said before in the House, the task is to balance rights and freedoms while upholding our duty to protect the safety of Canadians. That is not an easy task, but I am confident that Bill C-59, in partnership with Bill C-22, would provide a comprehensive and balanced approach to national security. It is respectful of the charter and our Constitution. That is why I support this bill, and I ask all members to do the same.

• (1815)

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my friend talked about supporting the charter. The NDP moved a series of amendments based on expert testimony from both security officials, people who head up some of our spy agencies, and human rights advocates. One of the amendments from the NDP was that Canada, by law, would not accept information that was garnered from torture, either directly from Canadian officials or indirectly through a third party government.

We have seen a number of cases over the years in which other governments that are open to the use of torture gather information that, as my friend would know, is not only inhumane in its

procurement but also suspect in its veracity. The New Democrats moved an amendment through the committee process to make that illegal, to make it so that all Canadian officials who stand in this process, one way or the other, would be unable to accept such information, because we know that even accepting the information creates a culture in which torture is condoned in other countries around the world. One cannot do indirectly what one cannot do directly.

Why did the Liberals vote against this motion? The actual text of the motion was preferred by civil rights experts and those in the security establishment, who agree that Canada should never be on the receiving end of torture, either directly or indirectly, and use that information for the prosecution of any case. The Liberals voted against this. They talk about the charter. Is it too much to ask for the actual application of the Charter of Rights in the legislation that we pass in the House?

Mr. Arif Virani: Mr. Speaker, in terms of the stance on torture, obviously my stance, as well as that of my party and our government, is unequivocal: We stand against torture.

I would reiterate for the member opposite what I mentioned in my speech. One of the launch pads for our discussion and, indeed, the passage of this bill was the Maher Arar inquiry, which looked at one of the most cited instances of the tragedy that can unfortunately occur when a person whose rights are violated is rendered or subjected to torture, and the incredible human rights pitfalls that arise therefrom. We have looked closely at the recommendations of the Arar inquiry and implemented some of those recommendations, as I mentioned in my speech, in the context of this very bill.

I would also reiterate that the bedrock foundation that protects against torture is the very instrument that we are having a very lively discussion about, which is the Charter of Rights itself. In section 12, within our Constitution, there is protection against cruel and unusual punishment. As a bedrock, that protects against the types of treatment and behaviours that both the member opposite and I will agree are abhorrent in Canada.

• (1820)

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the parliamentary secretary could speak a little more about the no-fly list. Unfortunately, the previous government chose not to put a redress system in place, so a number of requirements were needed to make the important steps that other countries have made. I have heard from constituents and I know the hon. member has as well. I am wondering if he could tell us a little about the importance of putting this in place and how Bill C-59 would put in place the first steps that would allow us to put the redress system in place.

Mr. Arif Virani: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Oakville North—Burlington for her advocacy and her work on the committee studying this very bill.

The no-fly list has become a very contentious issue. Speaking as a Muslim Canadian member of Parliament, at one time I thought this was a pernicious issue that affected my community and other people similarly situated around Canada. We have learned that it touches Canadians of every stripe, every demographic, and every background. One of the critical factors of the no-fly list is the lack of a domestic redress mechanism. We have heard from people who have told us point blank that there is a better redress system in the United States than there is in Canada.

We have funded the ability to resource and invest in a redress mechanism, but absent a legislative authority to implement the redress mechanism, the funding simply cannot be spent efficaciously. This is so important and has touched the constituents of all members of the House. What this bill would do is allow us to couple that funding with the legislative instrument to implement a redress mechanism that would allow people, from children all the way to octogenarians, to address the unfairness of being challenged and having their dignity impugned by virtue of simply sharing a name with a person who has done extremely bad actions in some other part of the world.

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to rise today to speak in this important debate on Bill C-59. I want to thank my colleagues on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, both past and present, who contributed to the in-depth study of our national security framework, as well as those who provided testimony on this bill. Thanks to that work, over 40 amendments were adopted by the committee, and I would like to highlight some of them.

First, there is an amendment that would add provisions enacting the avoiding complicity in mistreatment by foreign entities act, which was introduced by my colleague, the MP for Montarville. Canadians find torture abhorrent and an affront to their values. In the past, the Minister of Public Safety, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Minister of National Defence have issued directions to ensure that the Canadian government does not use, share, disclose, or request information that could put someone at risk of being tortured by a foreign entity. This amendment would enshrine in law a requirement for directions to be issued on using, disclosing, or requesting information. These directions would be made public and reported on annually to the public, to review bodies, and to the newly constituted National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians to ensure transparency and accountability.

I know that Canadians want to feel confident that their government is not complicit in foreign entities' use of torture, as it is well documented that information obtained through torture is unreliable. This amendment is a welcome reassurance, and I am proud that the committee adopted it, despite objections from the official opposition.

Second, the amended bill would strengthen privacy protections. Since referring the bill to committee before second reading, we have heard many stakeholders call for the strengthening of protections for information shared under the Security of Canada Information Sharing Act, and we introduced rigorous new standards. The amended bill specifies that the receiver of information would be required to destroy or return any personal information that is not

necessary for it to carry out its responsibilities related to national security.

I was personally proud to put forward an amendment that would formalize the relationship between the newly created national security and intelligence review agency and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner, which would ensure that the two agencies are not duplicating work. I was also proud to introduce an amendment that would require a ministerial authorization when CSIS is collecting from foreign actors information that could inadvertently compromise a Canadian's privacy. I believe that these changes would help to get the mix right when it comes to ensuring Canadians' safety and security and preserving their rights.

Bill C-59 is a much-needed overhaul of our national security framework. The passage of this bill would mark the largest overhaul of our national security infrastructure since 1984, when CSIS was created. It is fair to say that we are at a critical turning point in how government approaches national security. That is why I am pleased that the government has introduced this bill, not only to add better protections for privacy but also to bring our framework up to speed with the realities of the 21st century. There is an urgent need to shed the old ways of doing business, integrate security efforts, and harness all the tools at our disposal to prevent and mitigate threats.

When Justice Noël released his decision last year on the Canadian Security Intelligence Service's retention of associated data, he laid bare the challenge for us as parliamentarians. To quote Justice Noël, "the CSIS Act is showing its age. World order is constantly in flux... and priorities and opinions change. Canada can only gain from weighing such important issues once again."

With Bill C-59, the government is showing that it is up to the challenge. It recognized that the CSIS Act of 1984 may have been an appropriate response at the time it was written, but it is outdated given the realities of today's world. Today, the government has recognized that appropriate, responsible, and comprehensive legislation for the 21st century would mean altering that act substantially.

Bill C-59 makes changes in three key ways: by addressing the collection of datasets, by making important amendments to threat reduction measures under the act, and by addressing outdated legal authorities.

First, on data analytics, acquiring large volumes of information for analysis, when it is relevant to an agency's mandate, is an indispensable tool in intelligence work. However, data collection and analysis require a strong framework, and this bill provides that framework.

• (1825)

The bill lays out a legal authority for CSIS to collect, retain, and use datasets, and, to ensure transparency, provisions would include safeguards on its collection and use. For example, the personal information of Canadians that is not publicly available would require Federal Court authorization to retain. When it comes to foreign datasets, approval from the proposed new independent intelligence commissioner would be required. The new national security and intelligence review agency would have the authority to refer its findings to the Federal Court if it takes the view that CSIS has not acted lawfully when querying or exploiting datasets. I also introduced an amendment to Bill C-59 that was adopted at committee stage, ensuring that CSIS could retain the results of a query of a dataset in exigent circumstances to protect life or acquire intelligence vital to national security.

Bill C-59 would provide the accountability and transparency on dataset collection that is needed in the technological reality of today. It would modernize the CSIS Act, enhance judicial oversight where needed, and strengthen review and accountability. The bill also addresses the fact that today's threats are fast, complex, dynamic, highly connected, and mobile. CSIS can and does play a role in addressing these threats, often behind the scenes, but the original CSIS Act could never have imagined the threats we face today. As Justice Noël noted, that leaves security bodies in an unreasonably difficult situation when it comes to interpreting the law while continuing to protect Canadians' rights.

Bill C-59 would more clearly define the current threat reduction mandate of CSIS. It lays out what types of measures could be authorized by judicial warrants to ensure full compliance with the charter. CSIS would be required to seek a warrant for any threat reduction measure that would put a charter-protected right or freedom at risk. What is more, a warrant would only be issued if a judge is satisfied the measure specifically complies with the charter.

Bill C-59 would also establish in law an authorization regime for certain CSIS activities required to investigate the complex threats we face today. This would be modelled on the regime that already exists in the Criminal Code for law enforcement officers, adapted to the particular context of security intelligence investigations. It would ensure more transparent, lawful, and modernized authorities for CSIS that would ensure effective intelligence collection operations, and it would ensure robust accountability by clearly articulating reporting and review requirements.

Accountability, transparency, and respect for rights are at the heart of these proposals. That is what Canadians said they wanted; the government listened and it acted. During the consultation process, Canadians repeatedly emphasized the need for enhanced accountability and transparency. The Security Intelligence Review Committee, CSIS's current review body, pressed for enhancements as well. The new national security review agency and intelligence commissioner would ensure the most robust oversight and scrutiny possible.

We heard, loud and clear, from many witnesses and members of the public that protecting privacy and safeguarding human rights were missing under the Harper Conservatives' Bill C-51. With Bill C-59 further strengthened by amendments made at committee, I am confident that Canadians' privacy rights would be reinforced alongside the strengthening of our national security. Bill C-59 is a comprehensive and visionary plan for Canada in today's world. It is my hope that colleagues will join me in supporting Bill C-59.

• (1830)

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Picard (Montarville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to invite my colleague, a valued fellow committee member, to comment further on an important point relating to the court's important decision on data and megadata.

The court ruling said that the data were relevant but the legal structure did not allow CSIS to do what it was doing. The innovation we are putting forward in Bill C-59, together with other innovations proposed in committee on other aspects of Bill C-59, makes this bill a truly modern and contemporary document that aligns in every respect with its allies and especially with what we heard from people during the consultation.

[English]

Ms. Pam Damoff: Mr. Speaker, when we were studying the national security framework as a committee prior to the bill's introduction, the ruling came forward. We were able to ask CSIS questions at that time about how it was collecting data and how long it was holding onto it.

Liberal members of the committee and I were pleased, and I believe my colleague was as well, that we were able to put into Bill C-59 a legal authority for CSIS to collect, retain, and use these datasets, because it was sorely needed and was not in the act previously. It provides transparency, and it includes safeguards for the collection and use of these datasets.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that so many changes have been made to our anti-terrorism legislation, which are reflected in Bill C-59. I have stood in this place a number of times and complained that the government held consultations but did not listen. I am happy to say that this is not one of those times.

I submitted an extensive brief to the joint consultation, headed by the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Public Safety. When I read Bill C-59, I felt very gratified that this legislation was drafted with an eye to the recommendations of the commission of inquiry into the Air India disaster and the failure of our security system at that point resulting from our agencies' inability to talk among each other to share information that could have prevented that terrible tragedy. It also appeared to me that the drafters paid attention to the results of the inquiry into the atrocious treatment of Canadian citizen Maher Arar.

There are still weaknesses in this bill. I would have preferred, as the hon. member knows, to remove any kinetic powers from CSIS. Its power to disrupt plots may still prove to make us less secure than we were, given that CSIS was originally intended to be about information collection only, and it left the RCMP to take action on the ground for kinetic activities.

Overall, this is a substantial improvement over the situation in which we found ourselves in 2015 with the speedy passage of what I still call the "secret police act" or what was then Bill C-51.

This is a comment, more than a question to my hon. colleague, just to say on the record that I am pleased to vote for Bill C-59, although I would have preferred we had gone further and removed more of the things launched in Bill C-51.

• (1835)

Ms. Pam Damoff: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for her participation in the committee as we were doing clause-by-clause. I recognize that it is very difficult for her to attend these committee meetings, and certainly the clause-by-clause on this bill did take some time, and took her away from other tasks she could have been working on. Her input is always appreciated by me, personally.

We will always have a divergence of opinion on getting the right mix, but this bill has come a long way, and the changes we made have been well-received by the community.

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-59. As we know, it is the government's national security legislation. After months of debate, hearing from many witnesses, and reading expert briefs with respect to the bill, it is light on actions that will actually improve public safety and national security. I believe that Canada would be weaker because of this legislation, which hampers our agencies, cuts funding to intelligence and national security, and is more concerned about looking over the shoulder of those protecting us than watching those who seek to harm us. Let us be clear on this point. National security and intelligence officers and public servants are not a threat to public safety or privacy. They show dedication to protecting us and our country in a professional manner. However, Bill C-59 is more concerned with what someone might do in an effort to protect others than what criminals, extremists, and others might do to harm us.

In a world with growing international threats, instability, trade aggression, state-sponsored corporate cyber-espionage, and rising crime rates, Canada is weaker with the current Prime Minister and the Liberals in power. As I have said in the House before, public safety and national security should be the top priority of government and should be above politics so that the safety and security of

Canadians are put ahead of political fortunes. This bill on national security fails to live up to its title.

Looking at the body of the Liberals' work, we see a continuous erosion of Canada's safety and security. Bill C-71, the recent gun legislation, ignores criminals who commit gun crimes. Bill C-75 softens sentences and rehabilitation for terrorists and violent crimes. The legalization of drugs is being done in a way that all but assures that organized crime will benefit and Canadians are put at risk.

As world hostility and hatred grows, we need stronger support for our way of life, not the erosion of it. That means empowering front-line national security and intelligence workers, stronger border protections, a better transfer of information between policing and security bodies, plus assured prosecution of criminals and threats to Canada. We need to be looking proactively at emerging technologies rather than reactively trying to put the genie back in the bottle, as we have done with cybersecurity.

What was the intent with this bill? Canadians and parliamentarians alike can tell a lot from the language used by the minister and the people who the Liberal majority called to testify. The bill was positioned by the Liberals as protecting Canadians from the public servants who work to protect Canada and our interests, and the majority of witnesses heard at committee were law professors, civil liberties groups, and privacy organizations. While they have important and valid views, they shared essentially one point: be scared of public servants. It is funny that after the many times the Prime Minister has used public servants as a political shield, stating that he "always trusts and respects them", they are apparently more scary than threats of cyber-attacks from Chinese state-controlled hackers, ISIS extremists, white supremacists, and organized crime.

There is not much in this bill for security forces to do their work. With the Liberals' plan, there will now be four oversight bodies looking over the shoulder of our intelligence and security forces: first, a new parliamentary committee on security and intelligence oversight; second, the new national security and intelligence review agency; third, the expanded intelligence commissioner; and, finally, the existing oversights of Parliament and executive branches like the minister, the Prime Minister, and the national security advisor.

The Conservatives offered positive amendments. We asked the minister to tell us how these groups would work together to make it clear to Parliament, senior government officials, and those affected. This was turned down by the Liberals without any reason. It would seem reasonable that the minister would be happy to provide clarity to Canadians, and to those who need to work with the various boards, agencies, committees, and advisers, on how it will all work together. We also recommended that, as this new central intelligence and security agency would see information from a variety of departments and agencies, they play a role in identifying threats and providing a clear picture on the state of national security. The Liberals on the committee for some reason would prefer that the agency focus on only complaints and micromanaging our security professionals. If their goal had been to improve public safety, this suggestion would have been taken more seriously.

• (1840)

When we heard from security experts, they raised valid concerns. Dick Fadden, the former CSIS director, noted that the bill would send a message to security teams to be more restrictive with the information that they share. He said:

I haven't counted, but the number of times that the words "protection of privacy" are mentioned in this bill is really quite astounding. I'm as much in favour of privacy as everybody else, but I sometimes wonder whether we're placing so much emphasis on it that it's going to scare some people out of dealing with information relating to national security.

Information sharing between national security teams is essential to protecting Canadians and Canada. In fact, several inquiries, including one of the worst terrorism attacks in Canadian history, the Air India bombing, determined that information sharing was critical to stopping attacks.

Mr. Fadden stated that his worst nightmare scenario was an attack on Canada that was preventable; that being that information was withheld by one agency from other agencies. With Bill C-59, we would move toward more silos, less intelligence sharing, and more threats to Canadians. In his words, security professionals would have a clear message from the many repeated insertions of privacy and charter references, and, as he put it, to share less information lest they run afoul of their political masters.

The Conservatives offered a mild amendment that public servants be required to share information they thought was a threat to Canada with national security agencies. This was so all federal employees would have no fear of reprisal for sharing valid concerns with relevant authorities, like the new security review agency. This was turned down, again reaffirming that the Liberals on the committee were not focused on improving public safety and protecting Canadians.

Retired General Michael Day pointed out that there was nothing in the bill or in the government's policies to deal with emerging threats, real dangers today and tomorrow to our economic prosperity and our societal values. When he was asked by the Liberal MP from Mississauga—Lakeshore, "on the questions of artificial intelligence and potentially also quantum computing, how confident are you that Bill C-59...is a flexible enough framework to address unknown unknowns that may come at us through the cyber domain in those two areas", General Day replied, "Zero confidence".

There continues to be clear threats, but dealing with current and emerging threats were not the focus of the government with this bill. We have already missed the emergence of cybersecurity threats and are playing catch-up at a cost of billions of dollars in government spending, lost economic opportunities through stolen commercial secrets, and personal losses through cybercrime. We have not looked forward at the next problem, so we are heading down the same path all over again.

We heard from Professor Leuprecht, a national security expert who teaches at the Royal Military College. He raised a number of concerns. The first was that the increased regulation and administrative work needed to report to new oversight groups would effectively be a cut to those agencies, shifting money away from protecting Canadians. We did find out eventually how much that cost would be. Nearly \$100 million would be cut from national security in favour of red tape. Sadly, we only received this information a few weeks after the committee finished with the bill. The minister had knowingly withheld that information from my request for over six months. Once again, a lot of lip service to open and transparent government but very little actual transparency.

Dick Fadden, Professor Leuprecht, and Ray Boisvert, a former assistant director of CSIS and security expert with the Government of Ontario, also raised concerns of the overt hostility of China against Canada. When I asked him about our readiness for dealing with China's aggressions, he said:

I think that the answer is no. I don't think that we're oblivious to the threat...

I would argue that we do not really understand, in all of its complexity, how much China is different from Canada and how it aggressively uses all of the resources of the state against not just Canada but against any number of other countries in pursuit of its objectives.

• (1845)

At one meeting they noted that Chinese agents freely intimidated and threatened Canadians of Chinese descent, pushing them to support communist party initiatives. They or their families back in China could face the backlash of a highly oppressive regime and there was nothing that Canada did to protect them from such threats. China continues this trend, recently ordering Air Canada to call Taiwan part of China.

Mr. Boisvert said:

There's also the issue that China is now in the age of self-admitted "sharp power", and they exercise that power with very little reservation anymore. There's no longer even a question of hiding their intentions. They are taking a very aggressive approach around resources and intellectual property, and they also are very clear in dealing with dissidents and academics. They've arrested some of them, and they punish others, including academic institutions in North America, at their will, so I think there's a value challenge that Canadians have to consider along with the economic opportunities discussion. The Cold War is over, but a new version is rapidly emerging, and I think our focus on counterterrorism is not always our best play.

We did not have the right people, the right information, and the right issues at committee to have a comprehensive law that would enhance national security. It appears that yet again the Liberals are bringing out legislation to deal with perceived threats at the expense of not dealing with actual threats.

If Canadians were being well served by the government, we would have dealt with serious questions ignored by the Liberals in this legislative process.

Canada has at least 60 returned ISIS terrorists in Canada. That number is likely low, as we have heard that as many as 180 or more Canadians have left our country to fight for ISIS. After the Liberals revoked Canada's ability to strip citizenship from such a heinous and despicable group as ISIS, Canada is now stuck simply welcoming them back with no repercussions and acting like nothing has gone wrong. We will likely never be able to prosecute them or extradite them because we cannot easily transfer intelligence; that is information gathered in other countries of these murders and rapists into evidence suitable for prosecutions in this country.

Canada needs to join the ranks of other modern countries in bringing known crimes conducted by Canadians abroad into our courts without compromising security agents and intelligence sharing agreements. We need to deal with the obvious intelligence to evidence gap that continues to exist in this legislation. This legislation has failed to do this, with Liberal MPs voting against Conservative amendments that tried to address this exact issue.

If we were serious about dealing with national security, we would have treated privacy and security as a single policy, not the competing interests that many civil groups suggested. Protecting Canadians includes protecting their privacy in addition to their economic opportunities, public safety, national security, and social values. These are a single policy, and for the most part those professionals who protect us know this.

Professor Leuprecht said:

We are not here because there's in any way some large-scale violation of the professionalism or the capabilities in which the community does its job...In the Five Eyes community, we have, by far, the most restrictive privacy regime. This is a choice that we have made as Canadians...other countries that have more rigorous parliamentary and other review mechanisms than Canada have also given their community more latitude in terms of how it can act, what it can do, and how it can do it.

Retired Lieutenant-General Michael Day stated:

...the trade-off between privacy and security, between the charter and the reasonable measures to protect Canadians. This is not, from my perspective obviously, a binary issue, or one that should be looked at as absolutes, but rather a dynamic relationship that should remain constantly under review. We should embrace that tension as opposed to pretending it doesn't exist, with a conversation being seen to have value in and of itself.

● (1850)

This is crystal clear when we look at the growing issue of cybercrime, such as identity theft, fraud, corporate espionage, and hacking. Privacy and other interests, social and financial, are one, and yet throughout this legislative process the Liberals presented this bill as a choice between one and the other.

The bill ignores the massive shift in issues with Canada's border security. Canada lacks the assets, people, and facilities to deal with the current threat to our borders. We know that an open border, which is internationally known as unprotected, is currently being exploited. It is being exploited not only by those who are shopping for a new home, but by human traffickers, smugglers, drug cartels, and other organized crime rings. While this issue is new, it is real and

needs to be managed better than just hoping everything will sort itself out.

If we were serious about national security, we would be dealing more seriously with Canada's most important law enforcement agency, the RCMP. Beyond a glaring gap in personnel, failing equipment, and an increased lack of faith in its leadership, the RCMP is headed toward a crisis level of challenges: a growing opioid crisis; legalized marijuana; influx of ISIS terrorists; open borders without a plan to manage illegal border crossers; and increasing cybercrime, just to name a few. The RCMP is overwhelmed, while the Liberals present false information and sidestep questions on what to do.

The Liberals may have called this a national security law, but it is more like a regulatory bill. It would erode rather than help public safety. It deals with security from the federal government's perspective rather than from protecting Canadians first and foremost.

[Translation]

Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is privilege for me to rise today to speak to Bill C-59, which deals with the anti-terrorism measures put in place by the previous government.

For obvious reasons, I do not intend to support Bill C-59, which was introduced by the Liberal government. First, this bill weakens the measures that we have available to us as a society to fight terrorism. It is important to remember that Bill C-51 was introduced in the wake of two terrorist attacks that occurred here in Canada, the first in Saint-Jean-Richelieu and the second here in Ottawa. That was in October 2014.

At the time, the Quebec minister of public security, Lise Thériault, called me and told me that there had been an accident in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu. I responded that that was unfortunate. Then she told me that someone had died. I told her that that was tragic. Finally, she told me that it was tragic but that they also suspected we were dealing with a terrorist attack.

We sometimes think that terrorist attacks occur only in other countries, but sometimes they happen in our communities, like Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, in the heart of Quebec. Hatred prompted an individual to attack a member of the Canadian Armed Forces, in this case Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent.

I remember the ceremony I attended in November 2014, before entering the House. We honoured Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent with members of his family. I remember the words of his sister, Louise Vincent, who said, "Patrice Vincent, my brother, the warrant officer, was a hero."

Mr. Vincent had a successful career in the Canadian Armed Forces, although by no means an illustrious one. He was a good serviceman nonetheless, always ready and willing to serve. His plans for a well-deserved retirement were dashed when he was run down in a restaurant parking lot by an individual driven by extremist Islamist ideology. His sister also said she was surprised that Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent was targeted specifically because he was in uniform. She said, "Losing a brother is one thing, but knowing that it was due to a deliberate act is something else entirely."

The attacker had a specific intention. We know the criteria for determining whether an attack qualifies as an act of terrorism. There was a political desire to commit murder in the name of an ideology, which obviously goes against our Canadian values. At the time, Prime Minister Harper said that "our country will never be intimidated by barbarians with no respect for the maple leaf or any other symbol of freedom". He added:

When such cowards attack those who wear our uniform, we understand they are attacking all of us as Canadians...We are going to strengthen our laws here in Canada to stop those intent on importing an ideology that incites hatred, cruelty, and death in other parts of the world.

It is important to note that regardless of the speeches we given in the House and the partisan positions we may take, one of the overriding responsibilities of Parliament is to ensure the safety of Canadians, especially since in the past decade we have witnessed the emergence of ideologies that are increasingly spread by social media. That is why the anti-terrorism act was put in place. It provided certain tools to ensure that we were better prepared.

Clearly, when we think of the death of Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent, who was struck down by the vehicle of a radicalized young man in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu in 2014, we realize that it is important to ensure that our police forces, intelligence service, and the RCMP have all the tools they need to intervene.

● (1855)

This also impacts the legal aspect. While acting within the limits of the law and respecting fundamental freedoms, the police, with the co-operation and authorization of independent people such as judges, must have the legal tools to prevent terrorist attacks. That was the objective of the anti-terrorism measures introduced by Bill C-51.

Unfortunately, the Liberals decided to weaken this law. That is not surprising. As we saw during question period, the Liberals are showing a degree of spinelessness and indolence that is truly worrisome. For example, some jihadists, in particular members of ISIS, have created sites to spread propaganda in Canada. One of the pillars of the anti-terrorism act was to shut down websites promoting ideas that incite violence.

Unfortunately, the Liberals want to weaken these tools. There was the example mentioned in question period of a known terrorist who went to the Middle East and has now returned to Canada. We would expect the government to increase surveillance of this individual. However, we have learned that he parades in front of television cameras and boasts about his relations with ISIS terrorists. Furthermore, he even admits that he lied to CSIS so he could continue to conduct his activities.

This man's name is Abu Huzaifa. He is in contact with ISIS and appears to be fully in thrall to Islamic ideology. He is hiding

information from the RCMP and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service and operates in such a way that our police officers do not necessarily have the tools to lay charges. He openly admits to having lied to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service.

Here is our message to the government: we have these intelligence services, so the government has a political responsibility to signal zero tolerance for people who want to attack the pillars of our society. There have already been two tragic victims here in this country. We do not want that to happen again.

At this time, the government is lax and spineless, and that worries us. The individual in question, Abu Huzaifa, quotes the Quran and promotes all that hatred.

These people need to be kept under control. If charges are to be laid, that must be done so as to protect the people, because that is the government's job. A government's primary role is to protect its people. Unfortunately, Bill C-59 undermines the tools available to police forces and various other bodies to fulfill the state's primary responsibility.

For example, one of the provisions of the legislation would make it harder for the police to prevent a terrorist attack and would add red tape. When our intelligence services or police services are in the middle of the action and have sensitive information that could prevent a terrorist attack on Canadian soil, it is important that they can intervene. That is what the Anti-terrorism Act, 2015, provides for. There has been no major problem regarding the enforcement of that legislation, which the Liberals supported, I might add. At no time were the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms or the different statutes that exist in Canada affected by the anti-terrorism legislation.

The Liberals' idea of keeping a promise, as we saw with their approach to legalizing marijuana, is to force it down the throats of Canadians. They are using the same approach with Bill C-59.

● (1900)

It is too bad because Canadians' safety is at stake. Again, the measures in Bill C-59 do not address an actual problem. There is an adage in English that says:

[English]

"If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

● (1905)

[Translation]

If something is working, we must leave it alone, because the day we need it, the day the police learn of a potential terrorist attack, they will need all of the necessary tools to prevent this attack, in accordance with Canadian laws, of course.

I want to talk about another aspect of the bill that will muddy the waters even more. In Canada, the Security Intelligence Review Committee, or SIRC, is responsible for overseeing the operations of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. This body is the envy of all western democracies when it comes to the review of intelligence activities. The Security Intelligence Review Committee is an example to the world because it has the ability to dig through every nook and cranny of our intelligence agency. In other words, there is no spy in Canada who does not have SIRC constantly looking over his or her shoulder.

The current government created a committee that is so far off base. Canada already has a framework that allows for in-depth review of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. I must point out that the Anti-terrorism Act strengthened this power, even for threat reduction activities. When the measures in the Anti-terrorism Act were adopted, we not only ensured that police officers and agents at the Canadian Security Intelligence Service had more latitude, but we also ensured that all of these provisions would be covered by the Security Intelligence Review Committee. The act provides more powers, but there is also increased oversight.

We have a well-established and well-functioning system that is the envy of the world. It would have been smart for the government to expand the scope of that organization. The Liberals are obsessed with creating organizations and, as a result, they have just duplicated the Security Intelligence Review Committee and, in a way, created a new organization. We are talking about a new organization that has basically the same mission as the previous one, but it is not the same. In the end, they are undermining an excellent system in place for oversight of our intelligence agencies, and creating a new system that will duplicate it and cover other areas. They are creating confusion and more bureaucracy. What does this actually mean? Police officers are going to have more eyes looking over their shoulders. This will create confusion, more bureaucracy, and more red tape. The goal is for police officers and intelligence officers to be more accountable, but their primary mission is to protect Canadians.

Unfortunately, the Liberal approach is going to create more red tape and more obstacles. Meanwhile, we are learning that guys like Abu Huzafa are free to roam this country, openly bragging about their associations with ISIS, and the government says it wants to welcome these people.

I think the government should be sending an important message, one that should convey zero tolerance for incitement to hate, for hate speech, and for anyone willing to use violence to achieve their ends. That is one of the flaws of this bill.

I mentioned the red tape and the duplication of an organization that, at the end of the day, is going to create confusion in the oversight of our intelligence activities.

On top of that, the government produced a huge document because it wanted to show that it supported the bill, but that there was still work to be done. It therefore added all kinds of regulations to the bill. In other words, it is creating a law and will make the regulations afterwards.

The regulations clarify the act. The advantage of that for the minister or the executive branch is that the regulations can be

changed. The disadvantage of putting this sort of thing in an act is that then the government has to obtain the authorization of Parliament to change it, and we know how many steps are involved in that process. There is first reading, second reading, and third reading in the House of Commons, then the same in the Senate, and then Royal Assent. That is not to mention elections every four years, appointments, prorogations, and summer breaks.

Rather than having more flexible tools, the government is making the process unnecessarily cumbersome by putting most of the regulations for the Anti-terrorism Act into the grab bag it calls Bill C-59. That moves us further way from the main goal, which is to develop effective, legal tools to protect Canadians. That is another flaw.

Speaking of websites, as I was saying, one of the pillars of the Anti-terrorism Act is that it attacks the source of the violence, the hate speech that incites violence. Violent words lead to violent actions. That is why it is important to crack down on online content that incites violence. Once again, the government should be more vigilant and provide additional tools to accomplish that goal. There are provisions in the Criminal Code that deal with this sort of online content. Incitement to violence was a crime even before the Anti-terrorism Act came into force. In fact, the Criminal Code has been around since the beginning of time, or at least since the beginning of our parliamentary system. Incitement to violence goes against Canadian values.

Why interfere with the work of those responsible for protecting us and reducing violence at its source, where it really begins, on extremist websites, whether they be extreme left or extreme right? Right now, we are talking mainly about Islamist extremist websites, but that could change. The government could develop a tool to identify websites that incite people to violence.

I was honoured to be with the family of Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent following his tragic death. During Patrice Vincent's funeral, Louise Vincent said that she hoped her brother's death would not be in vain. As parliamentarians, it is incumbent upon every one of us to ensure that the people who have sacrificed their lives so we can live freely and debate here in the House—always respectfully, whether we agree with one another or not—have not done so in vain. People have fought for our freedom. Some have even shed blood quite recently. As parliamentarians, we must ensure that those who are responsible for keeping us safe have the tools they need to take action. That is why the Anti-terrorism Act was enacted.

It is for those very reasons that I will oppose this Liberal bill. It undermines the tools we gave our police officers so they could protect the people of this country, which is the primary responsibility of any state.

• (1910)

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to my colleague, who says he is very concerned about the need to protect Canadians. I am sure we all share that concern.

Can my colleague comment on the Canadians who were arrested when he was minister, back when the law was written to suit his purposes? Can he comment on the former government's experience? Did officials arrest people who, in his opinion, deserved to be arrested?

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister of Transport for his question and for supporting our bill and the anti-terrorism measures that were put in place following the terrorist attacks.

Now the Minister of Transport is looking uncomfortable, because there are self-confessed terrorists roaming free. When I was a minister, I could not predict the future, but no one was giving interviews to the *New York Times* saying that they were a terrorist who was proud to be openly walking the streets of Canada with no interference from the government.

There is a line separating the political realm from intelligence activities, but the current government has a moral responsibility to condemn these totally unacceptable acts that are threatening the foundations of our democracy. I just wanted to tell my hon. colleague that his government has a responsibility to enforce zero tolerance for terrorists. It still has a year to do that, so it should hurry up.

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his comments, most of which I had already heard during the last Parliament. I had the pleasure of debating him from time to time and not sharing his opinions on Bill C-51.

One thing he said this evening struck me. He said that the authorities need all the tools. In his opinion, should this toolbox also include information obtained through torture?

We know that that kind of information is usually weak precisely because it was obtained through torture and that the use of such information violates international agreements.

• (1915)

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, as my colleague knows, I personally, the Conservative Party, and the government are against torture.

When I talk about the tools needed, I am talking about the measures needed to intervene. For instance, when a police force knows that a terrorist attack is being planned on Canadian soil or elsewhere, it must be able to intervene and stop it. We did not have that before the Anti-terrorism Act. Our intelligence agencies now have the capacity to stop such threats.

My colleague can sleep better at night since the Anti-terrorism Act was passed, because the authorities can step in proactively and save lives.

[English]

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have to say this is my first experience at these late night sittings. I happened to be away last week on fisheries committee travel, and put in almost as many hours there as our colleagues did here. I truly missed attending those late night votes and supporting our colleagues.

I would like to ask my colleague to expound a little more on the silos that would be created with the potential passage of this bill. In much of our work on the fisheries committee, we hear about the silos being created within different government departments, not just fisheries. We have heard multiple times about the bureaucracy and the silos that are created. The member started to touch on this in his speech. Maybe he could expound a little more on the dangers of creating those silos and different enforcement agencies not being able to share information freely.

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to be in the House with the member.

In a nutshell, before the introduction of the Anti-terrorism Act, the right hand of the government did not know what the left hand was doing. That is why we introduced those measures, to share information. Unfortunately, in the Liberals' bill that is in front of us, the government is creating additional bureaucracy, including two oversight agencies, which is creating more silos, more confusion, more red tape, and less time for people on the ground to do their job, which is to protect us.

[Translation]

Mr. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague from Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis was the minister of public safety and emergency preparedness for over two years. During that time, a certain phenomenon was taking place in Quebec. Young Quebecers were leaving Quebec to go to Syria. Many of these young people returned after just a few months, when my colleague was minister.

What did the government of the day do to guarantee the safety of Canadians?

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Hull—Aylmer for his question. I sometimes stay in his riding when I am here in Parliament. It is too bad that he is a Liberal, because other than that I am sure he is an excellent MP.

My colleague was not a member of Parliament at the time. However, in the Anti-Terrorism Act, his party and ours put in place a measure to ensure that individuals were intercepted as soon as knowledge came to light of their intentions to commit terrorist acts. At the time, the only people who could be stopped from boarding a plane were those who wanted to blow it up mid-flight.

When it comes to anti-terrorist measures, this time we did something tangible to ensure that we had the tools to arrest someone who wanted to take part in terrorist activities abroad. Canada does not want to be an exporter of terrorists, nor does it want to import them. Canada wants to take the appropriate measures coming and going, and that is what we did in the legislation.

I hope that the current government can continue to prevent terrorists from coming to commit terrorist acts on Canadian soil.

• (1920)

[English]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the hon. member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis has perhaps a more nostalgic and certainly more favourable view of what took place in the 41st Parliament, but I put it to him that my experience in studying Bill C-51 convinced me that it made us much less safe. I will give an example and hope my hon. colleague can comment on it.

Far from creating silos, Bill C-59 would help us by creating the security and intelligence review agency because, in the words of former chief justice John Major who chaired the Air India inquiry, we have had no pinnacle review, no oversight over all the actions of all the agencies. This is a real-life example. When Jeffrey Delisle was stealing secrets from the Canadian navy, CSIS knew about it. CSIS knew all about it, but it decided not to tell the RCMP. The RCMP acted when it got a tip from the FBI. We know that in the Air India disaster, various agencies of the Government of Canada—CSIS knew things as did the RCMP—did not talk to each other. The information sharing sections to which the member refers have nothing to do with government agencies sharing the information they have about a threat. They have to do it by sharing personal information of Canadians, such as what occurred to Maher Arar.

To the member's last comment that nothing has gone wrong since Bill C-51, my comment is: how would we know? Everything is secret. Rights could have been infringed. No special advocate was in the room. We have no idea what happened to infringe rights during Bill C-51's reign.

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, had my hon. colleague supported the Anti-terrorism Act, she would have accomplished exactly what she was seeking, which is information sharing throughout the federal government when Canada is under threat. This is exactly what the Anti-terrorism Act achieves. She can be assured that this is now the law of the land.

What is unfortunate is that with the current Liberal bill, instead of expanding the authority of SIRC, the Security and Intelligence Review Committee, which is a gem, as I mentioned in my speech, the Liberals are creating another structure, adding more bureaucracy and more layers of approval, which would impact the efficiency of the work on the ground, bringing no results but more costs.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before I get into the substantive remarks, I want to respond to an interesting comment made by my friend from Hull—Aylmer, who was asking in a question about actions taken by the previous government. There were many provisions in Bill C-51 that were aimed at making Canadians safer. However, one thing I do not think has come up yet in the debate was a specific proposal that the Conservative Party put forward in the last election to make it illegal to travel to specific regions. There were certain exceptions built into the legislation, travel for humanitarian purposes, and for journalistic purposes perhaps. That was a good proposal, because when people are planning to travel to Daesh-controlled areas in Syria and Iraq, outside of certain very clearly defined objectives, it is fairly obvious what the person is going there to do. This was another proposal that we had put forward, one that the government has not chosen to take us up on, that I think eminently made sense. It would have given

prosecutors and law enforcement another tool. Hopefully, that satisfies my friend from Hull—Aylmer, and maybe he will have further comments on that.

Substantively on Bill C-59, it is a bill that deals with the framework for ensuring Canadians' security, and it would make changes to a previous piece of legislation from the previous Parliament, Bill C-51. There are a number of different measures in it. I would not call it an omnibus bill. I know Liberals are allergic to that word, so I will not say it is an omnibus bill. I will instead say that it makes a number of disparate changes to different parts of the act. I am going to go through some of those changes as time allows, and talk about some of the questions that are raised by each one. Certainly some of those changes are ones that we in the Conservative Party do not support. We are concerned about those changes making us less safe.

Before I go on to the particular provisions of the bill, I want to set the stage for the kinds of discussions we are having in this Parliament around safety and security. We take the position, quite firmly, that the first role of government is to keep people safe. Everything else is contingent on that. If people are not safe, all of the other things that a government does fall secondary to that. They are ultimately less important to people who feel that their basic security is not preserved. Certainly it is good for us to see consensus, as much as possible in this House, on provisions that would genuinely improve people's safety. Canadians want us to do it, and they want us to work together to realistically, in a thoughtful and hard-headed way, confront the threats that are in front of us.

We should not be naive about the threats we face, simply because any one of us individually has not interacted with a terrorist threat, although many people who were part of the previous Parliament obviously have interacted directly with a terrorist threat, given the attack that occurred on Parliament Hill. In any event, just because there are many threats that we do not see or directly experience ourselves, it does not mean they are not there. Certainly we know our law enforcement agencies are actively engaged in monitoring and countering threats, and doing everything they can to protect us. We need to be aware that those threats are out there. They are under the surface, but they are having an impact. There is a greater potential impact on our lives that is prevented if we give our security agencies and our law enforcement the tools that they need.

Many of these threats are things that people are aware of. There is the issue of radicalization and terrorism that is the result of a world in which the flow of information is much more across borders than it used to be. Governments can, to some extent, control the entry of people into their space, but they cannot nearly as effectively control the ideas of radicalization that come easily across borders and that influence people's perceptions. People can be radicalized even if they have never had any physical face-to-face interactions with people who hold those radical views. These things can happen over the Internet much more easily today than they did in the past. They do not require the face-to-face contact that was probably necessary in the past for the dissemination of extreme ideas. People living in a free western society can develop romanticized notions about extremism. This is a challenge that can affect many different people, those who are new to Canada, as well as people whose families have been here for generations.

● (1925)

This growing risk of radicalization has a genuine impact, and it is something that we need to be sensitive to. Of course, there are different forms of radicalization. There is radicalization advanced by groups like Daesh. We also need to be aware of threats that are posed from extreme racist groups that may advocate targeting minorities, for instance, the shooting we saw at the mosque in Quebec City, or the attack that just happened at a mosque in Edson. These come out of extreme ideas that should be viewed as terrorism as well. Therefore, there are different kinds of threats that we see from different directions as the result of a radicalization that no longer requires a face-to-face interaction. These are real, growing, emergent threats.

There is also the need for us to be vigilant about threats from foreign governments. More and more, we are seeing a world in which foreign authoritarian governments are trying to project power beyond their borders. They are trying to influence our democratic system by putting messages out there that may create confusion, disinformation, and there may be active interference within our democratic system. There is the threat from radical non-state actors, but there are also threats from state actors, who certainly have malicious intent and want to influence the direction of our society, or may attack us directly, and want to do these sorts of things to their advantage. In the interest of protecting Canadians, we need to be aware and vigilant about these threats. We need to be serious about how we respond to them.

As much as we seek consensus in our discussion of these issues, we sometimes hear from other parties, when we raise these real and legitimate concerns, the accusation that this is spreading fear. We should not talk in these sorts of stark terms about threats that we face, as that is creating fear. The accusation is that it also creates division, because the suggestion that there might be people out there with radical ideas divides us. However, I think there is a difference between fear and prudence. We need to know that difference as legislators, and we need to be prudent without being fearful.

Fear, I think, implies an irrational, particularly an emotional response to threats that would have us freeze up, worry incessantly, stop going about our normal activities, or maybe even lead to the demonization of other people who someone might see as a threat. These are all things that could well be manifestations of fear, which

is not good, obviously. However, prudence is something quite different. Prudence is to be aware of threats in a clear-headed, factual, realistic way. It is to say that thoughtfully, intellectually, reasonably, we need to do everything we can to protect ourselves, recognizing that if we fail to be prudent, if we do not take these rational, clear-headed steps to give our law enforcement agencies the tools they need to protect us from real risks that exist, then we are more liable to violence and terrorism. Also, obviously from that flows a greater risk of people being seized with that kind of emotional fearful response.

It is our job as legislators to encourage prudence, and to be prudent in policy-making. Therefore, when we raise concerns about security threats that we face, illegal border crossings, radicalization, and Daesh fighters returning to Canada, it is not because we are advocating for a fearful response, but rather we are advocating for a prudent response. Sometimes that distinction is lost on the government, because it is often typical of a Liberal world view to, perhaps with the best of intentions, imagine the world to be a safer place than it is.

● (1930)

Conservatives desire a better world, but we also look at the present world realistically. Sometimes one of the problems with Liberals is that they imagine the world to already be the way they would like it to be. The only way we get to a better, safer world, on many fronts, is by looking clearly at the challenges we face, and then, through that, seeking to overcome them.

It was variously attributed to Disraeli, Thatcher, or Churchill, but the line "the facts of life are conservative" is one that sticks out to me when we talk about having a prudent, clear-sighted approach to the threats we face. My colleague, the member for Thornhill, may correct me on who originally said that. Disraeli lived first, so we will say it was probably him.

Now, having set the framework through which we view, and I think we ought to view this bill, I want to speak specifically to a number of the changes that have been put forward. One of points we often hear from the government is about changes it has made with respect to the issue of torture. An amendment was proposed at committee. I understand that this was not part of the original bill, but came through in an amendment. It restates Canada's position that torture is obviously not acceptable. There is no disagreement in this House about the issue of torture. Obviously, we all agree that torture is unacceptable. Some of the aspects of this amendment, which effectively puts into law something that was already in a ministerial directive, is obviously not a substantial change in terms of changing the place or the mechanism by which something is recognized that was already in place.

Of course, when it comes to torture, it is a great opportunity for people in philosophy classrooms to debate, theoretically, what happens if there is information that could save lives that could be gained that way. However, the reality is the evidence demonstrates that torture not only is immoral, but is not effective at gathering information. A commitment to effectiveness, to giving our law enforcement agencies all the tools that are necessary and effective, while also opposing torture, are actually quite consistent with each other. I do not think there is anything substantively new with respect to those provisions that we are seeing from the government.

It is important to be clear about that. There are areas on which we agree; there are areas on which we disagree. However, there are areas on which we agree, and we can identify that clearly.

There are some other areas. In the beginning, the bill introduces a new national security and intelligence review agency. There is a new administrative cost with this new administrative agency. One of the questions we have is where that money is going to come from. The government is not proposing corresponding increases to the overall investment in our security agencies.

If a new administrative apparatus is added, with administrative costs associated with it, obviously that money has to come from somewhere. Likely it is a matter of internal reallocation, which effectively means a fairly substantial cut to the operational front-line activities of our security agencies. If that is not the case, I would love to hear the government explain how it is not, and where the money is coming from. It seems fairly evident that when something is introduced, the cost of which is about \$97 million over five years, and that is an administrative cost, again that money has to come from somewhere. With the emergence and proliferation of threats, I know Canadians would not like to see what may effectively amount to a cut to front-line delivery in terms of services. That is clearly a concern that Canadians have.

Part 2 deals with the intelligence commissioner, and the Liberals rejected expedited timing requirements on the commissioner's office. This effectively means that security operations may be delayed because the commissioner is working through the information. There are some technical aspects to the bill, certainly that we have raised concerns about, and we will continue to raise concerns about them. We want to try to make sure that our security agencies, as my colleagues have talked about, have all the tools they need to do their job very effectively.

Now, this is something that stuck out to me. There are restrictions in part 3 to security and intelligence agencies being able to access already publicly available data.

• (1935)

Effectively, this bill has put in place restrictions on accessing that data, which is already publicly available. If security agencies have to go through additional hoops to access information that is already on Facebook or Twitter, it is not clear to me why we would put those additional burdens in place and what positive purpose those additional restrictions would achieve. That is yet another issue with respect to the practical working out of the bill.

Given the political context of some of these changes, one wonders why the government is doing this. It is because the Liberals put

themselves in a political pickle. They supported, and voted for, Bill C-51. The current Prime Minister, as a member of the then third party, voted in favour of that legislation. However, the Liberals then wanted to position themselves differently on it, and so they said they were going to change aspects of it when they got into government. Some of those changes serve no discernible purpose, and yet they raise additional questions regarding the restrictions they would put on our law enforcement agencies' ability to operate effectively and efficiently.

Part 4 of the proposed legislation puts additional restrictions on interdepartmental information-sharing. Members have spoken about this extensively in the debate, but there are important points to underline here.

The biggest act of terrorism in our country's history, the Air India bombing, was determined to have been preventable by the Air India inquiry. The issue was that one agency was keeping information from another agency that could have prevented the bombing. Certainly, if information is already in the hands of government, it makes sense to give our agencies the tools to share that information. It seems fairly obvious that people should be able to share that information. It is clearly in the national interest. If it can save lives to transfer information effectively from one department to another with regard to files about individuals who may present a security threat, and if CSIS already has that information and is going to share it with the RCMP, I think all Canadians would say that makes sense. However, Bill C-59 would impose additional restrictions on that sharing of information.

Through taking a hard-headed look at the threats we face and the need to combat them, parliamentarians should be concerned about those particular provisions in this bill.

Another issue raised in this bill is that of threat disruption. Should security agencies be able to undertake actions that disrupt a security threat? Previously, under Bill C-51, actions could be taken to disrupt threats without a warrant if those actions were within the law. If there was a need to do something that would normally be outside of the law, then a warrant would be required, but if it was something ordinarily within the remit of the law, then agencies could proceed with it. It could be something like talking to the parents of a potential terrorist traveller, and alerting them to what was going on in the life of their child, or being present in an online chatroom to try to counter a radicalizing message. These things are presently legal under Bill C-51.

However, under Bill C-59, there would be a much higher standard with respect to the activities that would require a warrant, which include disseminating any information, record, or document. It seems to me that something as simple as putting a security agent in an online chatroom to move the conversation in a particular direction through the dissemination of information would require a warrant, which can create challenges if one wants to engage in an organic conversation so as to counter messages in real time.

All of us in the House believe in the need for parameters and rules around this, but Bill C-51 established parameters that allowed for intervention by law enforcement agencies where necessary. It did keep us safe, and unfortunately Bill C-59 would make this more difficult and muddies the waters. That is why we oppose it.

• (1940)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan for striking a blow for members being recognized by the Speaker as they rise to speak.

I want to suggest we had a confusion in some of the debate here tonight between the concept of oversight and review. I have the advantage, although I do not think at the time I thought it was an advantage, to be participating as much as I could in the legislative review of the parliamentary committee that was looking at Bill C-51 in the 41st Parliament.

Justice John Major who chaired the Air India inquiry testified at that committee his opinion it was not, as my friend from Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan has suggested, a lack of tools that meant intelligence agencies did not share information. Judge Major said it was human nature. He said they just will not share the information. His experience from the Air India inquiry led him to believe that CSIS could have the information and out of its own inclinations, would not share it with the RCMP.

This was confirmed for us by a witness who testified, an MI5 agent from the U.K. who has been a security liaison with Canada, Joe Fogarty, who gave numerous examples. He used the ones that were in the public domain, by the way. He said he knew of more that we could not talk about, that the RCMP were deliberately kept in the dark by CSIS because it chose not to share the information.

I heard my hon. Conservative colleague speak of the cost of developing the security intelligence review agency. If the cost will save lives, then there is no point in not having a properly sourced security intelligence review agency. Review and oversight are quite different from review at the end of the year. We desperately need oversight of what our agencies are doing.

• (1945)

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, my friend raised a few issues. She made a distinction that I do not actually agree is a distinction. It is conceptually a distinction, but in practice not as clearly. She talked about agencies having the ability to share information and on the other hand whether or not they have the will to share the information. She points out quite rightly that there may be cases where agencies still do not share the information because they do not have the will to share that information. Regardless, we should all agree that they should at least have the ability to share that information.

If we give agencies the ability, but make it harder for them to share that information and require them to jump through more hoops to do that, probably we are more likely to draw out that kind of territorial human instinct if it is more difficult to share the information. In other words, people might be willing to share the information if it is easier. If it is more difficult, that might give them another reason not to, which makes the case that we cannot change human nature. Some people in the House would like to, incidentally, but that is a whole other topic of conversation. We cannot change human nature, but we can establish the rules that at least facilitate the best possible outcomes while trying to influence the culture of our agencies as well.

I want to clarify my comments about the costs associated with the creation of the new national security and intelligence review agency. I did not say that the cost is decisive and that we should never do things that cost money when it comes to our security. Clearly not. I simply made the point that, if we are investing in new administrative infrastructure and we do not fund that with new money, it has to come out of somewhere. Yes, we can make an argument for this new agency, but it should not come at the expense of cuts to front-line security. That was the point.

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Madam Speaker, a lot of conversation has gone on in the House around an individual called Abu Huzaifa who has admitted two things. He has admitted that he has committed brutal crimes as an enforcer for ISIS and he has also admitted to travelling for terrorist purposes. However, he admitted these things to the CBC and to *The New York Times*. The thing that concerns me, beyond that fact that he is here in Canada, is that the RCMP and CSIS only became aware of him after he began taping his podcast with *The New York Times*. The government has said over and over again, "There is no concern. Canadians, we are aware, we know where these individuals are." At this point in time, clearly our security agencies do not have the tools they need. Why is the government at this point in time thinking it is a good idea to reduce those powers and those abilities from our forces?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her committed work on this issue and so many others.

The case she raised should underline for us the reality that we face real and significant threats here in Canada and that we should not close our eyes to those threats. Closing our eyes to them does not make them disappear. I recently spoke to Yazidi survivors of Daesh. One woman told me about being able to identify someone she saw here in Canada as someone involved in Daesh and who she had seen previously when she was in the Middle East.

We know that this is a reality and many refugees come to this country to escape persecution. Imagine the experience of someone coming to Canada to escape persecution and then seeing someone here who was a member of the group that was persecuting that person. We need to be aware of the reality of the threats we face and ensure we have all the tools in place to combat them.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his comments.

I would like to clarify with him, if possible, a discussion that I began with my colleague from Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis on the use of torture. He said he was without a doubt against torture. He was clear and to the point.

However, my question is on the information obtained. Whether we are talking about the previous Bill C-51 or Bill C-59 before us today, does the hon. member think it is acceptable to use information obtained through torture by countries other than Canada, countries that engaged in torture to obtain intelligence?

• (1950)

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, I addressed it to some extent in my remarks, in terms of emphasizing, first, the fact that all of us agree in the House that torture is unacceptable and, second, specifically that most of the evidence about torture as a tool for obtaining information demonstrates that it is not very effective. Most of our partners around the world fully understand that information gathered through torture is itself not particularly reliable or effective.

Very clearly, this information should not be used as part of prosecutions and that sort of thing. If we are notified by one of our allies of an active threat to Canada and there is a need to act, the process of verifying the source of that information likely comes after ensuring that we have done everything we can to protect ourselves from any and all threats. I do not think many members would disagree with that point, but clearly, again—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am sorry, but I want to allow for one more question.

Questions and comments, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this is one of two pieces of legislation that would assist the government in fulfilling an election promise: making changes to Bill C-51. The other piece of legislation dealt with the parliamentary oversight committee. I realize it is the other component of the legislation. I would be interested in the member opposite explaining specifically why the Harper government would not have included that in Bill C-51. I know the member was involved in those days with Mr. Harper.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: First, Madam Speaker, in terms of what I was involved in with Mr. Harper, most of my duties in PMO simply involved fetching coffee and photocopying, but one has to start somewhere.

On the issue of the legislation that the member spoke of, Canadians were very disappointed that the government failed to keep its commitment with respect to that legislation. It had promised, if I remember correctly, a parliamentary committee that would be responsible for providing oversight for security. What it gave us was a committee of parliamentarians, which might sound similar to a parliamentary committee, but it is not, because the government has the power to appoint all of the members. It does not function as an ordinary committee of the House would. The government is required to appoint, for instance, certain numbers of members of the opposition, but there is nothing to prevent it from appointing, say, people who have recently left the Liberal caucus to that committee in place of members of the official opposition. There is no requirement that there be certain numbers of members of the official opposition.

Given that this legislation that Liberals put forward is actually quite weak in terms of allowing any kind of parliamentary scrutiny, it

certainly does not pass muster, even committed to in the Liberal platform.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Before I go to resuming debate, someone actually yelled out "time" a while ago after a member was speaking, and that is very disrespectful. I do have a clock in front of me. Also, when the Speaker asks for questions and comments, if only one person stands, then we assume there is not much interest for those questions and comments, so we generally give a little more time to that person to allow for a fruitful debate. When a lot of people are standing, then the question and the comment should be about the same length of time. I wanted to reiterate that. If there is a lot of interest to ask questions, I assume people will stand up all together and then I will be able to judge better.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Madam Speaker, I rise tonight to speak against Bill C-59 at third reading. Unfortunately, it is yet another example of the Liberals breaking an election promise, only this time it is disguised as promise keeping.

In the climate of fear after the attacks on Parliament Hill and in St. Jean in 2014, the Conservative government brought forward Bill C-51. I heard a speech a little earlier from the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, and he remembers things slightly different than I. The difference is that I was in the public safety committee and he, as the minister, was not there. He said that there was a great clamour for new laws to meet this challenge of terrorism. I certainly did not hear that in committee. What I heard repeatedly from law enforcement and security officials coming before us was that they had not been given enough resources to do the basic enforcement work they needed to do to keep Canadians safe from terrorism.

However, when the Conservatives finally managed to pass their Anti-terrorism Act, they somehow managed to infringe our civil liberties without making us any safer.

At that time, the New Democrats remained firm in our conviction that it would be a mistake to sacrifice our freedoms in the name of defending them. Bill C-51 was supported by the Liberals, who hedged their bets with a promise to fix what they called "its problematic elements" later if they were elected. Once they were elected in 2015, that determination to fix Bill C-51 seemed to wane. That is why in September of 2016, I introduced Bill C-303, a private member's bill to repeal Bill C-51 in its entirety.

Some in the House at that time questioned why I introduced a private member's bill since I knew it would not come forward for a vote. In fact, this was an attempt to get the debate started, as the Liberals had already kept the public waiting for a year at that point. The New Democrats were saying, "You promised a bill. Well, here's our bill. It's very simple. Repeal all of C-51."

Now, after more than two years and extensive consultations, we have this version of Bill C-59 before us, which does not repeal Bill C-51 and fails to fix most of the major problems of Bill C-51, it actually introduces new threats to our privacy and rights.

Let me start with the things that were described, even by the Liberals, as problematic, and remain unfixed in Bill C-59 as it stands before us.

First, there is the definition of "national security" in the Anti-terrorism Act that remains all too broad, despite some improvements in Bill C-59. Bill C-59 does narrow the definition of criminal terrorism speech, which Bill C-51 defined as "knowingly advocates or promotes the commission of terrorism offences in general". That is a problematic definition. Bill C-59 changes the Criminal Code wording to "counsels another person to commit a terrorism offence". Certainly, that better captures the problem we are trying to get at in the Criminal Code. There is plenty of existing case law around what qualifies as counselling someone to commit an offence. Therefore, that is much better than it was.

Then the government went on to add a clause that purports to protect advocacy and protest from being captured in the Anti-terrorism Act. However, that statement is qualified with an addition that says it will be protected unless the dissent and advocacy are carried out in conjunction with activities that undermine the security of Canada. It completes the circle. It takes us right back to that general definition.

The only broad definition of national security specifically in Bill C-51 included threats to critical infrastructure. Therefore, this still raises the spectre of the current government or any other government using national security powers against protesters against things like the pipeline formerly known as Kinder Morgan.

The second problem Bill C-59 fails to fix is that of the broad data collection information sharing authorized by Bill C-51, and in fact maintained in Bill C-59. This continues to threaten Canadians' basic privacy rights. Information and privacy commissioners continue to point out that the basis of our privacy law is that information can only be used for the purposes for which it is collected. Bill C-51 and Bill C-59 drive a big wedge in that important protection of our privacy rights.

Bill C-51 allowed sharing information between agencies and with foreign governments about national security under this new broad definition which I just talked about. Therefore, it is not just about terrorism and violence, but a much broader range of things the government could collect and share information on. Most critics would say Bill C-59, while it has tweaked these provisions, has not actually fixed them, and changing the terminology from "information sharing" to "information disclosure" is more akin to a sleight of hand than an actual reform of its provisions.

• (1955)

The third problem that remains are those powers that Bill C-51 granted to CSIS to act in secret to counter threats. This new proactive power granted to CSIS by Bill C-51 is especially troubling precisely because CSIS activities are secret and sometimes include the right to break the law. Once again, what we have done is returned to the very origins of CSIS. In other words, when the RCMP was both the

investigatory and the enforcement agency, we ran into problems in the area of national security, so CSIS was created. Therefore, what we have done is return right back to that problematic situation of the 1970s, only this time it is CSIS that will be doing the investigating and then actively or proactively countering those threats. We have recreated a problem that CSIS was supposed to solve.

Bill C-59 also maintains the overly narrow list of prohibitions that are placed on those CSIS activities. CSIS can do pretty much anything short of committing bodily harm, murder, or the perversion of the course of democracy or justice. However, it is still problematic that neither justice nor democracy are actually defined in the act. Therefore, this would give CSIS powers that I would argue are fundamentally incompatible with a free and democratic society.

The Liberal change would require that those activities must be consistent with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. That sounds good on its face, except that these activities are exempt from scrutiny because they are secret. Who decides whether they might potentially violate the charter of rights? It is not a judge, because this is not oversight. There is no oversight here. This is the government deciding whether it should go to the judge and request oversight. Therefore, if the government does not think it is a violation of the charter of rights, it goes ahead and authorizes the CSIS activities. Again, this is a fundamental problem in a democracy.

The fourth problem is that Bill C-59 still fails to include an absolute prohibition on the use of information derived from torture. The member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan made some eloquent statements on this with which I agree. What we have is the government saying that now it has included a cabinet directive on torture in Bill C-59, which gives the cabinet directive to force of law. The cabinet directive already has the force of law, so it absolutely changes nothing about this.

However, even worse, there is no absolute prohibition in that cabinet directive on the use of torture-implicated information. Instead, the prohibition says that information from torture can be used in some circumstances, and then it sets a very low threshold for when we can actually use information derived from fundamental rights violations. Not only is this morally repugnant, most likely unconstitutional, but it also gives us information that is notoriously unreliable. People who are being tortured will say precisely what they think the torturer wants them to say to stop the torture.

Finally, Bill C-59 would not do one of the things it could have done, and that is create a review agency for the CBSA. The CBSA remains without an independent review and complaints mechanism. It is one of our only law enforcement or security agencies that has no direct review agency. Yes, the new national security intelligence review agency will have some responsibility over the CBSA, but only in terms of national security questions, not in terms of its basic day-to-day operations.

We have seen quite often that the activities carried out by border agencies have a major impact on fundamental rights of people. We can look at the United States right now and see what its border agency is doing in the separation of parents and children. Therefore, it is a concern that there is no place in Canada, if we have a complaint about what CBSA has done, to file that complaint except in a court of law, which requires information, resources, and all kinds of other things that are unlikely to be available to those people who need to make those complaints.

The Liberals will tell us that there are some areas where they have already acted outside of Bill C-59, and we have just heard the member for Winnipeg North talk about Bill C-22, which established the national security review committee of parliamentarians.

● (2000)

The New Democrats feel that this is a worthwhile first step toward fixing some of the long-standing weaknesses in our national security arrangements, but it is still only a review agency, still only an agency making recommendations. It is not an oversight agency that makes decisions in real time about what can be done and make binding orders about what changes have to be made.

The government rejected New Democrat amendments on the bill, amendments which would have allowed the committee to be more independent from the government. It would have allowed it to be more transparent in its public reporting and would have given it better integration with existing review bodies.

The other area the Liberals claim they have already acted on is the no-fly list. It was interesting that the minister today in his speech, opening the third reading debate, claimed that the government was on its way to fixing the no-fly list, not that it had actually fixed the no-fly list. Canada still lacks an effective redress system for travellers unintentionally flagged on the no-fly list. I have quite often heard members on the government side say that no one is denied boarding as a result of this. I could give them the names of people who have been denied boarding. It has disrupted their business activities. It has disrupted things like family reunions. All too often we end up with kids on the no-fly list. Their names happen to be Muslim-sounding or Arabic-sounding or whatever presumptions people make and they names happen to be somewhat like someone else already on the list.

The group of no-fly list kids' parents have been demanding that we get some effective measures in place right away to stop the constant harassment they face for no reason at all. The fact that we still have not fixed this problem raises real questions about charter right guarantees of equality, which are supposed to be protected by law in our country.

Not only does Bill C-59 fail to correct the problems in Bill C-51, it goes on to create two new threats to fundamental rights and freedoms of Canadians, once again, without any evidence that these measures will make it safer.

Bill C-59 proposes to immediately expand the Communications Security Establishment Canada's mandate beyond just information gathering, and it creates an opportunity for CSE to collect information on Canadians which would normally be prohibited.

Just like we are giving CSIS the ability to not just collect information but to respond to threats, now we are saying that the Communications Security Establishment Canada should not just collect information, but it should be able to conduct what the government calls defensive cyber operations and active cyber operations.

Bill C-59 provides an overly broad list of purposes and targets for these active cyber operations. It says that activities could be carried out to "degrade, disrupt, influence, respond to or interfere with the capabilities, intentions or activities of a foreign individual, state, organization or terrorist group as they relate to international affairs, defence or security." Imagine anything that is not covered there. That is about as broad as the provision could be written.

CSE would also be allowed to do "anything that is reasonably necessary to maintain the covert nature of the activity." Let us think about that when it comes to oversight and review of its activities. In my mind that is an invitation for it to obscure or withhold information from review agencies.

These new CSE powers are being expanded without adequate oversight. Once again, there is no independent oversight, only "after the fact" review. To proceed in this case, it does not require a warrant from a court, but only permission from the Minister of National Defence, if the activities are to be domestic based, or from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, if the activities are to be conducted abroad.

These new, active, proactive measures to combat a whole list and series of threats is one problem. The other is while Bill C-59 says that there is a still a prohibition on the Canadian Security Establishment collecting information on Canadians, we should allow for what it calls "incidental" acquisition of information relating to Canadians or persons in Canada. This means that in situations where the information was not deliberately sought, a person's private data could still be captured by CSE and retained and used. The problem remains that this incidental collecting, which is called research by the government and mass surveillance by its critics, remains very much a part of Bill C-59.

• (2005)

Both of these new powers are a bit disturbing, when the Liberal promise was to fix the problematic provisions in Bill C-51, not add to them. The changes introduced for Bill C-51 in itself are minor. The member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan talked about the changes not being particularly effective. I have to agree with him. I do not think they were designed to be effective. They are unlikely to head off the constitutional challenges to Bill C-51 already in place by organizations such as the Canadian Civil Liberties Association. Those constitutional challenges will proceed, and I believe that they will succeed.

What works best in terrorism cases? Again, when I was the New Democrats' public safety critic sitting on the public safety committee when Bill C-51 had its hearings, we heard literally dozens and dozens of witnesses who almost all said the same thing: it is old-fashioned police work on the front line that solves or prevents terrorism. For that, we need resources, and we need to focus the resources on enforcement activities at the front end.

What did we see from the Conservatives when they were in power? There were actual cutbacks in the budgets of the RCMP, the CBSA, and CSIS. The whole time they were in power and they were worried about terrorism, they were denying the basic resources that were needed.

What have the Liberals done since they came back to power? They have actually added some resources to all of those agencies, but not for the terrorism investigation and enforcement activities. They have added them for all kinds of other things they are interested in but not the areas that would actually make a difference.

We have heard quite often in this House, and we have heard some of it again in this debate, that what we are talking about is the need to balance or trade off rights against security. New Democrats have argued very consistently, in the previous Parliament and in this Parliament, that there is no need to trade our rights for security. The need to balance is a false need. Why would we give up our rights and argue that in doing so, we are actually protecting them? This is not logical. In fact, it is the responsibility of our government to provide both protection of our fundamental rights and protection against threats.

The Liberals again will tell us that the promise is kept. What I am here to tell members is that I do not see it in this bill. I see a lot of attempts to confuse and hide what they are really doing, which is to hide the fundamental support they still have for what was the essence of Bill C-51. That was to restrict the rights and freedoms of Canadians in the name of national security. The New Democrats reject that false game. Therefore, we will be voting against this bill at third reading.

• (2010)

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member and I worked together on the public safety committee when Bill C-51 was discussed. I am intrigued this evening in this House, listening to the debate, by how many times Bill C-51 is referenced. I can only assume that it is referenced because it is the gold standard, and the Liberals are trying to improve on that.

I want to ask my hon. friend from the NDP a question. True to his position at that time on Bill C-51, as I think he has very clearly articulated again this evening, the NDP have an overly aggressive position and ideology on rights and freedoms versus security. I do not think he got the balance quite right. I think we nailed it in Bill C-51. He and I do not agree on that, but we are still friends.

I think it was the member for Malpeque who lobbied very hard on the part of the Liberals, saying that we needed an oversight committee to complement Bill C-51. I am wondering if the NDP member could comment on that a little further and on whether that has been achieved in this bill. The Liberals agreed at that time with Bill C-51. They supported it. They voted in favour of it. Their one concern was an oversight committee. I want to know if they have really fixed that.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Madam Speaker, certainly the hon. member and I did a lot of work together on opposite sides of Bill C-51. I will start by disagreeing with him that Bill C-51 is the gold standard of anything. What I have yet to see is anyone present the evidence.

It is very interesting that the Liberals had a good chance to do that when they presented Bill C-59 and to say that if they were going to keep major parts of Bill C-51, how they made us safer. Where is that report? That report is nowhere to be seen.

I do not believe it is a gold standard. I do not believe it made us safer. The hon. member fell once again into this idea that somehow giving up part of our rights will make us more secure. To me, that is a fundamental fallacy. Rights, freedoms, and security go together. I do not want to say hand in hand, because the government has devalued the currency of that phrase. However, I would say that we must do both. We must protect rights and freedoms. Full rights and freedoms do not make us less secure. They make us more secure and more united as a country.

• (2015)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety talked about how important it is that we get the right mix. I believe that within this legislation, there is the right mix of dealing with human rights and protecting the public from potential threats down the road.

What is interesting is that on the one hand, we have the Conservatives saying that they are going to vote against this legislation, because they believe that we are giving too heavy a balance or mix toward civil rights. We have the NDP members sticking with their outright opposition to anything and everything about Bill C-51, saying that we have not gone far enough.

If we look at what we have presented, which is fulfilling an election commitment, it seems to me that we have the right mix. I think Canadians will recognize that. Maybe it is not hand in hand, but it is ensuring that we are safe in our communities and that our rights and freedoms are protected at the same time.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Winnipeg North for his question, because he just illustrated my point once again. He is talking about the mix rather than the balance. However, he is still talking about trading some part of our rights for some mythical improved security.

I want to use torture as the example, because he is tending toward this Goldilocks argument that the Liberals are somehow always at that sweet spot between the left and the right, in the mushy middle. How much torture is the right amount? That is what he is arguing. What he is really saying is that the right to be protected from torture is not an absolute, because to be secure, sometimes we have to allow a little bit of torture. That is what he is actually arguing here. What New Democrats have always argued is that the right to be protected from torture is a fundamental right and that it is also fundamentally wrong-headed to think that information derived from torture will make us more secure. Again, the member stands up and makes that same kind of argument that somehow, if we get rid of a bit of our rights, we will be safer. There is no truth in that whatsoever.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his well-researched speech. The reason I say that is that I have been listening to many of the speeches, and he is the one who actually highlighted all the differences between Bill C-51 and Bill C-59 and where attention needs to be paid.

He raised the issue of the national interest, which is the core concern with respect to Bill C-51. We now have a situation where the government claims that the purchase from Kinder Morgan of this 65-year-old pipeline is in the national interest. The former governor of the Bank of Canada stated that "people...are going to die in protesting...this [Trans-Mountain] pipeline."

I would like the member to analyze that statement with respect to the situation we have vis-à-vis the national interest in the pipeline and Bill C-59.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Madam Speaker, the question gets right at this question of the broad definition of national security Bill C-51 brought in and that Bill C-59 really maintains. It says in Bill C-59 that dissent and advocacy will be protected unless they are carried out in concert with other activities that are likely to challenge national security. Since for national security, critical infrastructure is included, if the current government is saying that the Kinder Morgan pipeline is a piece of critical infrastructure, is the right to protest and advocate against Kinder Morgan still protected under the Anti-terrorism Act? I would argue that it is not.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I would say this to the hon. member for Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke. I remember the fight we had in the 41st Parliament with respect to Bill C-51, the so-called Anti-terrorism Act, which I believe made Canada much less safe. It is hard for me to actually vote for Bill C-59 now, especially when I hear his very good arguments.

However, I will tell him why I am going to vote for Bill C-59. I am very relieved to see improvements to what I thought were the thought-chill provisions in Bill C-51, the rules against the promotion of unexplained terrorism "in general". There are big improvements to the no-fly list. However, there are not enough improvements, for my taste, to the ability of CSIS to take kinetic action. The big failure

in Bill C-59 in front of us is the information sharing around what Canadians are doing with other governments.

The irony for me is that the Liberals voted for Bill C-51 in the 41st Parliament and voted against the destruction of environmental assessments in Bill C-38. Ironically, I think they have done a better job now of fixing the bill they voted for than of fixing the bill they voted against, at least as far as environmental assessments go. Therefore, I am voting against Bill C-69 on environmental assessments. However, I am voting for Bill C-59. I am influenced a lot by Professors Craig Forcece and Kent Roach, who overall think this is an improvement. I do too, overall. However, it does not fix everything Bill C-51 did to make us less safe.

I appreciate the member's thoughtful analysis, and I am going to vote for it, but with misgivings.

● (2020)

Mr. Randall Garrison: Madam Speaker, I guess I am disappointed, because I remember that the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands was one of the few members in the last Parliament who was courageous enough to stand with New Democrats and fight against Bill C-51, even when public opinion polling initially said that something like 79% or 80% of the people wanted action in this area. Eventually, that tide turned, because people were not prepared to sacrifice their rights for this mythical improvement in security.

Yes, I agree that there is one significant improvement in Bill C-59, and that is the narrowing of the provisions around criminal terrorism speech to say that one has to actually counsel someone to commit a terrorist act. However, when we stack that up against all the other things from Bill C-51 that remain, it is a fundamental diminishment of this country to have our fundamental rights so limited.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a real pleasure for me to rise and speak to an important bill and issues related to public safety and security in general.

I would like to begin my remarks with a positive word of thanks for those men and women who are charged with keeping our communities safe, certainly the front-line police officers and first responders, but a lot of the people in the intelligence networks from CSIS, to CSE, to think tanks that analyze these things, to engaged citizens who are constantly advocating on issues related to public safety and security. These are probably some of the most important debates we have in this chamber because we are charged with making sure we have a safe community and finding the right balance between the remarkable freedoms we enjoy in a democracy like ours and the responsibility to ensure that there is safety for Canadians. We thank those who are charged with doing that both in uniform and behind the scenes and sometimes under the cloak of secrecy. All Canadians respect that work.

I am going to talk about Bill C-59 from a few vantage points, some of the things that I thought were positive, but I am also going to express three areas of very serious concern I have with this legislation. In many ways, Bill C-59 is a huge step back. It is taking away tools that were responsibly provided to law enforcement agencies to be used in accordance with court supervision. In a lot of the rhetoric we hear on this, that part has been forgotten.

I am going to review some of it from my legal analysis of it, but I want to start by reminding the House, particularly because my friend from Winnipeg, the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader is here, that here we are debating yet another omnibus bill from the Liberal Party, something that was anathema to my friend when he was in opposition. Omnibus bills of this nature that cobbled together a range of things were an assault on democracy, in his words then, but here we are in late night sittings with time already allocated debating yet another Liberal omnibus bill. The irony in all of this is certainly not lost on me or many Canadians who used to see how the Liberals would howl with outrage whenever this happened.

Bill C-59 came out of some positive intentions. My friend from Victoria, the NDP's lead on the parliamentary security oversight committee of parliamentarians is here. I want to thank him for the work that we did together recommending some changes to the minister ahead of what became Bill C-59. The NDP member and I as the public safety critic for the Conservative Party sent two letters to the minister providing some general advice and an indication of our willingness to work with the government on establishing the committee of parliamentarians for security and intelligence oversight.

My friend from Victoria ably serves on that committee now and as a lawyer who has previously practised in the area of national security and finding the right balance between liberty and security, he is a perfect member for that committee as are my friends from the caucus serving alongside the Liberal members. That is very important work done by that committee and I wish them well in their work. We indicated pre Bill C-59 that we would be supportive of that effort.

In those letters we also indicated the need for a super-SIRC type of agency to help oversee some of the supervision of agencies like CSIS and CSE. We were advocating for an approach like that alongside a number of academics, such as Professor Forcese and others. We were happy to see an approach brought in that area as well.

It is important to show that on certain issues of national safety and security where we can drive consensus, we can say we will work with the government, because some of these issues should be beyond partisanship. I want to thank my NDP colleague for working alongside me on that. It took us some time to get the minister to even respond, so despite the sunny ways rhetoric, often we felt that some of our suggestions were falling on deaf ears.

• (2025)

I am going to commit the rest of my speech tonight to the three areas that I believe are risks for Canadians to consider with Bill C-59. I am going to use some real-world examples in the exploration of this, because we are not talking in abstract terms. There are real

cases and real impacts on families that we should consider in our debate.

The first area I want to raise in reference to the fact that when Bill C-59 was introduced, it was one day after a Canadian was convicted in a Quebec court in a case involving travelling abroad from Canada to join and work with a terrorist organization. Mr. Ismael Habib was sentenced the day before the government tabled this omnibus security legislation, and I think there is a certain irony in that. In his judgment, Justice Delsile said, "Did Ismael Habib intend to participate in or knowingly contribute to a terrorist activity? The entirety of the evidence demonstrates the answer is yes." There is such an irony in the fact that the day before this debate there was a conviction for someone who was leaving Canada to train and participate with a terrorist organization.

Only a short time before Mr. Habib left Canada to do this, the previous government criminalized that activity. Why? Really, there was no need to have in the Criminal Code a charge for leaving Canada to train or participate in a terrorist organization, but this was a reaction to a troubling and growing trend involving radicalized people and the ability for people to go and engage in conflicts far from home. Mr. Habib's case was the first of its kind, and the charge he was convicted of by a Quebec court was for an offence that just a few years before did not exist. This is why Parliament must be seized with real and tangible threats to public safety and security. Unfortunately, a lot of the elements of Bill C-59 are going to make it hard for law enforcement to do that, to catch the next Mr. Habib before he leaves, while he is gone, or before he returns and brings that risk back home.

The first area that I have serious concerns with in the bill relates to preventative arrest. This was a controversial but necessary part of Bill C-51 from the last Parliament. Essentially it moved a legal threshold from making it "necessary" to prevent a criminal activity or a terrorist act instead of "likely" to prevent. By changing the threshold to "necessary", as we see in this bill, the government would make it much harder for law enforcement agencies to move in on suspects that they know present a risk yet do not feel they have enough proof to show that it is necessary to prevent an attack. I think most Canadians would think that the standard should be "likely", which is on balance of probabilities. If we are to err on the reality of a threat that there is violence to be perpetrated or potential violence by someone, then err on the side of protection. We still have to have the evidentiary burden, but it is not too hard.

It is interesting who supported the preventative arrest portions of Bill C-51 in the last Parliament. The Prime Minister did as the MP for Papineau. I loved Bill C-51 in so many ways, because it showed the hypocrisy of the Liberal Party at its best. The Liberals were constantly critical of Bill C-51, but they voted for it. Now they are in a position that they actually have to change elements of it, and they are changing some elements that the Prime Minister praised when he was in opposition, and they had this muddled position. My friends in the NDP have referred to this muddled position before, because now they think their Liberal friends are abandoning the previous ground they stood on.

• (2030)

What did the Prime Minister, then the leader of the third party and MP for Papineau, say about preventative arrest in the House of Commons on February 18, 2015? He said:

I believe that Bill C-51, the government's anti-terrorism act, takes some proper steps in that direction. We welcome the measures in Bill C-51 that build on the powers of preventative arrest, make better use of no-fly lists, and allow for more coordinated information sharing by government departments and agencies.

What is ironic is that he is undoing all of those elements in Bill C-59, from information sharing to changing the standard for preventative arrest to a threshold that is unreasonably too high, in fact recklessly too high, and law enforcement agencies have told the minister and the Prime Minister this.

The Prime Minister, when he was MP for Papineau, thought these important powers were necessary but now he does not. Perhaps society is safer today. I would suggest we are not. We just have to be vigilant, vigilant but balanced. That is probably why in opposition he supported these measures and now is rolling them back.

Nothing illustrates the case and the need for this more than the case of Patrice Vincent. He was a Canadian Armed Forces soldier who was killed because of the uniform he wore. He was killed by a radicalized young man named Martin Couture-Rouleau. That radicalized young man was known to law enforcement before he took the life of one of our armed forces members. Law enforcement officers were not sure whether they could move in a preventative arrest public safety manner.

The stark and moving testimony from Patrice's sister, Louise Vincent, at committee in talking about Bill C-51 should be reflected upon by members of the Liberal Party listening to this debate, because many of them were not here in the last Parliament. These are real families impacted by public safety and security. Louise Vincent said this:

According to Bill C-51, focus should be shifted from "will commit" to "could commit", and I think that's very important. That's why the RCMP could not obtain a warrant from the attorney general, despite all the information it had gathered and all the testimony from Martin Couture-Rouleau's family. The RCMP did its job and built a case, but unfortunately, the burden of proof was not met. That's unacceptable.

It is unacceptable. What is unacceptable is the Liberals are raising the bar even higher with respect to preventative arrest. It is like the government does not trust our law enforcement agencies. This cannot be preventative arrest on a whim. There has to be an evidentiary basis for the very significant use of this tool, but that evidentiary basis should not be so high that it does not use the tool, because we have seen what can happen.

This is not an isolated case. I can recite other names, such as Aaron Driver. Those in southwestern Ontario will remember that thanks to the United States, this gentleman was caught by police on his way to commit a terror attack in southwestern Ontario. He was already under one of the old peace bonds. This similar power could be used against someone like Alexandre Bissonnette before his horrendous attack on the mosque in Quebec City. This tool could be used in the most recent case of Alek Minassian, the horrific van attack in Toronto.

Preventative arrest is a tool that should be used but with an evidentiary burden, but if the burden is too high necessary to prevent

an attack, that is reckless and it shows the Prime Minister should review his notes from his time in opposition when he supported these powers. I suggest he did not have notes then and probably does not have notes now.

The second issue I would like to speak about is the deletion of charges and the replacing with a blanket offence called counselling commission of a terrorism offence.

• (2035)

What would that change from Bill C-51? It would remove charges that could be laid for someone who was advocating or promoting a terrorism attack or activity. Promotion and advocacy are the tools of radicalization. If we are not allowing charges to be laid against someone who radicalized Mr. Couture-Rouleau, do we have to only catch someone who counsels him to go out and run down Patrice Vincent? Should we be charging the people who radicalized him, who promoted ISIS or a radical terrorist ideology, and then advocated for violence? That should be the case. That actually conforms with our legal test for hate speech, when individuals are advocating or promoting and indirectly radicalizing.

Therefore, the government members talk about the government's counter-radicalization strategy, and there is no strategy. They have tried to claim the Montreal centre, which was set up independently of the government, as its own. The government would not tour parliamentarians through it when I was public safety critic, but it tours visiting guests from the UN and other places. That was an initiative started in Montreal. It has nothing to do with the Liberals' strategy. I have seen nothing out of the government on counter-radicalization, and I would like to.

The same should be said with respect to peace bonds, another tool that law enforcement agencies need. These have been asked for by law enforcement officials that we trust with their mandate. They are peace officers, yet the government is showing it does not trust them because it is taking away tools. The peace bond standard is now in a similar fashion to the preventative arrest standard. Agencies have to prove that it is necessary to prevent violent activity or terrorism, as opposed to the Bill C-51 standard of "likely to prevent". A protection order, better known as "a peace bond", is a tool, like preventative arrest, that can set some constraints or limitations on the freedom of a Canadian because that person has demonstrated that he or she is a potential threat. To say the individuals have to be a certain threat, which a "necessary" standard promotes, is reckless and misguided.

I wish the MP for Papineau would remember what he said a few years ago about the reduction of the high burden on law enforcement in preventative arrest situations. Sadly, there are going to be more Aaron Drivers out there. I always use the case of Aaron Driver, because sometimes members of specific groups, some Muslim Canadians, have been unfairly targeted in discussions about radicalization. This is a threat that exists and not just in one community. Aaron Driver's father was in the Canadian Armed Forces, a career member of the military. Their son was radicalized by people who advocated and promoted radical ideology and violence. With this bill, we would remove the ability to charge those people who helped to radicalize Aaron Driver. However, this is a risk that exists.

Let us not overstate the risk. There is not a bogeyman around every corner, but as parliamentarians we need to be serious when we try to balance properly the freedom and liberties we all enjoy, and that people fought and died for, with the responsibility upon us as parliamentarians to give law enforcement agencies the tools they need to do the job. They do not want a situation where they are catching Aaron Driver in a car that is about to drive away. We have to find the right balance. The movement of standards to "necessary" to prevent the commission of a terrorism offence shows that the Liberals do not trust our law enforcement officers with the ability to collect evidence and lay charges, or provide a peace bond, when they think someone is "likely" to be a threat to public safety and security.

I started by saying that there were elements I was happy to see in Bill C-59, but I truly hope Canadians see that certain measures in this would take away tools that law enforcement agencies have responsibly asked for, and this would not make our communities any safer.

• (20:40)

Mr. Scott Simms (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague a question regarding previously proposed Conservative legislation and some of the major misgivings we had with it when we were in opposition. It was with respect to the Charter of Rights. I remember that there was a deep discussion about what seemed like an unlimited amount of authority by CSIS at the time to bring about a power that made a lot of people feel uncomfortable. Certainly, it almost felt like the balance check was not there, a check by which the rights of Canadians would be protected.

The member said that there are measures in this particular bill that diminish the role of the authorities in particular cases when doing their job. However, if one weighs that against the individual rights we hold dear to us through the charter, certainly the measures we have taken here should answer a lot of those fears. I would like to get his comment on that.

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Madam Speaker, with respect to the major misgivings that he talks about, I highlighted the Prime Minister's remarks regarding preventative arrests. He supported the moves with respect to preventative arrests in Bill C-51, and I am sure he knew they did not offend the charter.

As I said, people seem to forget that these powers are not viewed in isolation. These are tools given to law enforcement that require an evidentiary burden before serious tools like peace bonds or preventative arrests are used. This cannot be done on a whim. There is a difference between the case involving Mr. Habib, the guy who travelled to be radicalized by ISIS and was convicted in a Montreal court the day before the government tabled this bill, and that of Mr. Couture-Rouleau, for example. Mr. Couture-Rouleau did not even leave Canada to be radicalized and trained by terrorist forces. He did it through his own social media feeds and through his network on the ground.

It reflects the charter when we ask law enforcement to meet a standard. This bill would make the standard so high that authorities would not be able to carry out preventative arrests. They would have to wait until the aftermath. We are catching the terrorist, as opposed to preventing the terrorism.

• (20:45)

Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Madam Speaker, my colleague used the word "vigilant", and I connect with that word. It is a very important word, and there is a big issue there.

Could he explain the difference between vigilance and fearmongering, which is what the Liberal government tends to put forward whenever someone talks about this issue? Liberal members tend to say that when we bring this issue up, we are fearmongering. Could he differentiate between the two words?

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Madam Speaker, vigilance is right, and that is why I brought real examples into my speech here tonight. This is not about howling at the moon that I am a tough-on-crime guy. These are real cases, and they represent the reality that parliamentarians must face in balancing liberty with protections in society as threats change.

I refer him, and my Liberal friends listening, to the testimony of Louise Vincent, sister of Patrice Vincent, in the context of Bill C-51. She said, "The RCMP did its job and built a case, but unfortunately, the burden of proof was not met. That's unacceptable." It is unacceptable. Law enforcement knew Couture-Rouleau was a risk and that he was likely to commit an attack, but they did not feel the case met the standard of "necessary" or that he "would" commit an attack, so he was not preventatively detained.

These are real cases. I have always said that we should not overstate the risk, but we have a responsibility to work with law enforcement to give them tools to keep us safe. By taking these tools back, the government is indirectly telling parliamentarians and Canadians that it does not trust the very people we charge with keeping us safe. On this side, we do trust them.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, to the last point made by my hon. friend from Durham, that Bill C-51 in the 41st Parliament, the Anti-terrorism Act, was there to make us safe, again, the expert evidence we heard, even before that bill passed, was that Bill C-51 under the previous government made us less safe.

For that, I cite the evidence of Joe Fogarty, an MI5 agent doing security liaison between Canada and U.K. When asked by the U.K. authorities about what Canadian anti-terrorism legislation they might want to replicate in the U.K., he answered "not a thing", that they have created a situation which is akin to an accident waiting to happen. It has made Canadians less safe, through the failure to ensure that one agency talks to the other. In the example that the member just gave, agencies have a proactive requirement to talk to each other and not guard their information jealously.

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Madam Speaker, I wonder if that member would invite the same approach that the British use? Literally, if they walk out of their house, they are on television in Britain. With CCTV, the intrusion into lives is unparalleled. Is that what that member might be suggesting? Their security forces have a totally different landscape, which cannot even be connected to our law enforcement and the tools they have here. To compare it to the United Kingdom is quite frankly irresponsible.

Law enforcement has asked for tools with respect to preventative arrest. There needed to be an evidentiary threshold. Allegations that we were going to have some police state, and ridiculous arguments that I heard around Bill C-51, were embarrassing. Why I quoted the Prime Minister was because he supported these preventative arrest powers in Bill C-51. As I said, the Liberals criticized Bill C-51 in a bland and undetailed way, but they voted for it. One of the specific areas where the Prime Minister was willing to stand up and say "where necessary" was on preventative arrests.

This is about balance. Some on the left have used an unbalanced approach to talking about public safety and security, and I think it diminishes responsible debate in this chamber.

• (2050)

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to follow up on the comments from the member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame around charter protections.

The former Conservative government said that judicial involvement was to protect the charter rights. However, the way the bill was written was to give an exemption from charter rights.

Does the member agree that the bill needed to be rewritten so that the judicial involvement was to protect charter rights, not to give an exemption for them?

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Madam Speaker, no. In fact, I would invite that member to consult the testimony made by the last head of CSIS who, before he left his post about a year ago, had testified in front of

one of our committees—I cannot remember which one—saying that powers of preventative arrest from tools in Bill C-51 had been used several dozen times. There had never been an incident where a situation of a charter violation was going to be used at all.

What this was about, and why I referred to the Prime Minister's own comments, is that this was about my three major concerns. Changes to preventative arrest, raising the burden for peace bonds or protective orders, actually went contrary to what we heard from victims and those impacted by these attacks. The tools are not unique to terrorism.

As I have said, the terrible case of the mosque shooting, the Bissonnette case, is a case where the tools could have been applied if they had thought social media rantings went to a "likely to commit". By using a "necessary" standard, we are handcuffing law enforcement and they are struggling to maintain the high level of safety and security they want to deliver for Canadians.

Why do we not trust law enforcement in a way that is balanced and backed up by our court and charter? The Liberals are taking our system and not balancing it. They are putting our police at a disadvantage.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Pursuant to Standing Order 69.1 the first question is on parts 1 to 5 of the bill, as well as the title, the preamble, part 9 regarding the legislative review, and clauses 169 to 172 dealing with coming into force provisions. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The recorded division is deferred.

The next question is on part 6 of the bill and the coming into force provisions contained in clause 173.

[Translation]

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt these elements of the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All those in favour will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The recorded division on these elements of the bill stands deferred.

The next question is on parts 7 and 8 of the bill. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt these elements of the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All those in favour will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The recorded division on these elements of the bill stands deferred.

The House would normally proceed at this time to the taking of the deferred recorded division at third reading stage of the bill. However, pursuant to order made Tuesday, May 29, the deferred recorded divisions stand deferred until Tuesday, June 19, at the expiry of the time provided for oral questions.

FIREARMS ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-71, An Act to amend certain Acts and Regulations in relation to firearms, as reported (with amendment) from the committee.

● (2055)

[English]

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): There are 28 motions in amendment standing on the Notice Paper for the report stage of Bill C-71. Motions Nos. 1 to 28 will be grouped for debate and voted upon according to the voting pattern available at the Table.

[Translation]

I will now put Motions Nos. 1 to 28 to the House.

[English]

MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC) moved:

Motion No. 1

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 1.

Motion No. 2

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 3.

Motion No. 3

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 4.

Motion No. 4

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 5.

Motion No. 5

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 6.

Motion No. 6

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 7.

Motion No. 7

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 8.

Motion No. 8

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 9.

Motion No. 9

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 10.

Motion No. 10

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 11.

Motion No. 11

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 12.

Motion No. 12

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 13.

Motion No. 13

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 14.

Motion No. 14

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 15.

Motion No. 15

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 16.

Motion No. 16

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 17.

Motion No. 17

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 18.

Motion No. 18

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 19.

Motion No. 19

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 20.

Motion No. 20

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 21.

Motion No. 21

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 23.

Motion No. 22

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 24.

Motion No. 23

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 25.

Motion No. 24

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 26.

Motion No. 25

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 27.

Motion No. 26

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 28.

Motion No. 27

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 29.

Motion No. 28

Bill C-71 be amended by deleting Clause 30.

• (2100)

[Translation]

Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-71 at report stage.

In my opinion, Bill C-71 is like a bad play. Let me explain. First, with regard to parliamentary work, the government shut down debate at second reading. What is more, the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security asked that it be allowed a sufficient number of meetings and witnesses, but the number of meetings was cut short. From the start, the government did not want to debate Bill C-71; it just wanted to impose the bill on us.

This bill was introduced for marketing purposes. We saw the government doing just that. The Liberals told themselves that they would introduce a bill on firearms to win votes and to get the Conservatives all worked up and drive them crazy. Well, we decided not to get all worked up. We have been smart about this. We looked at what was happening and we saw that it was not working.

Ultimately, Liberals in rural ridings are only hurting themselves. Those people are not fools. Canadians are not fools. Law-abiding Canadians can see that this bill plays politics by targeting the wrong people. It targets hunters and sport shooters while giving street gangs and real criminals a free pass. The Liberals tried to impress, but they ended up shooting themselves in the foot, no pun intended.

This also marks the return of a version of the gun registry, which was abolished a few years back. The Liberals resurrected a very insidious approach, in the form of reference numbers and records that gun retailers have to keep. When a retailer closes, the government takes possession of that information. Reference numbers are kept forever. The Liberals say there is no registry, they swear they are telling the truth, but all the elements are there. In a moment, I am going to talk about the amendments we proposed to fix these problems. All our amendments were rejected.

In order for us, the members of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, to do our job properly, we asked for at least seven meetings. We conducted an analysis and examined what had been done by the minister's much-vaunted committee. Incidentally, the Liberals provided a long list of witnesses they said they had consulted, yet those people said they had never been consulted, despite appearing on the list. That is another problem the minister needs to consider.

We, the members of the committee, determined we needed seven meetings to do our job properly. The Conservatives had a list of 21 witnesses representing a variety of perspectives, from firearms advocates to civil rights defenders. There was a little bit of everything. We wanted to do a good job, but the Liberals cut the number of meetings down to four and limited us to seven witnesses. We had to make some tough choices. The Liberals raced through the study of the bill. We were hoping to get things done so everyone would be happy, but it did not work. The government was in a mad rush to get it over with, because constituents in rural Liberal ridings were getting on their case, and rightly so.

The Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness created a committee to discuss guns and street gangs. As I said at the

beginning of my speech, all the focus is on hunting weapons instead of street gangs. I do not know what happened between the minister's consultations and the tabling of Bill C-71, but the bill contains absolutely no mention of street gangs. This has yet to be cleared up. It is a mystery worthy of Sherlock Holmes. Maybe one day we will find a solution.

When the minister introduced the bill, he wanted to scare people. He spoke about the serious problem of the rise in crimes committed with firearms in Canada. What he did not say was that the Liberals were using 2013 as their reference year. In the past 10 years, 2013 was the year with the fewest crimes in Canada. He spoke about a surge in crime, but the crime rate was returning to its usual levels. They used the 2013 statistics to indicate that there was an surge in gun crimes and that something had to be done about it. However, crimes are not committed by hunters and sport shooters, but by street gangs. Nevertheless, there is nothing about that.

• (2105)

The other serious problem, as I pointed out at the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, concerns first nations. As much as the Liberal government cares about all issues that affect first nations, it did not consult them and is now to some extent ignoring the problem. In committee, a representative from Saskatchewan told us that first nations would not abide by Bill C-71, first, because it is unconstitutional, and second, because guns are traditionally handed down from generation to generation. Canada's first nations are saying that Bill C-71 does not apply to them and that they will go to court to have it declared unconstitutional if the government tries to impose it.

What are we to do, then? The Liberals introduced a bill that does not address the issue of street gangs and that indigenous people are going to disregard. The only ones left are the hunters and sport shooters, who will once more be subject to stricter gun controls, which are already the strictest in the world.

The first nations issue is not a partisan matter, but it is very troubling. When we return in the fall, we need to clarify that, because the fact that indigenous peoples are not concerned about Bill C-71 and are not following the rules is problematic. We cannot have one type of security for one group of individuals and another type for other groups. We must all be on equal footing.

Our committee meetings to ask witnesses questions were limited, but we still did our work. We brought forward 45 amendments to Bill C-71. We took our work seriously. I will list a few of them, so that Canadians can see that they were reasonable.

First of all, we addressed the issue of firearms classification. It is currently the government that determines which firearms are restricted or prohibited, but Bill C-71 puts that entirely in the hands of the RCMP. We proposed an amendment that would give the minister the authority to change the classification of firearms based on recommendations from the manufacturer and the RCMP. Thus, we are proposing that the RCMP and the manufacturers still do their jobs, but that the government retain the power to make certain decisions to prevent the RCMP from making all the decisions, without the government being able to intervene.

Then, there are the chief firearms officers, who will be able to visit the premises of firearms retailers and check their records without a warrant. The government can therefore enter into the place of business of law-abiding retailers with no particular reason other than they sell arms. I believe this needs justification and a warrant.

Now, I want to talk about the date. Today is June 18, and on June 30, a list of 20 prohibited firearms will come into force, even though the bill is still being debated in the House. The firearms that will be prohibited are currently restricted. We are not even at third reading, and the Senate has not yet studied it. We asked the government not to set a fixed date and to implement the act once the bill passes, but the government rejected this legitimate amendment.

As for the list of firearms, the RCMP will now decide which firearms are prohibited, but the bill lists the firearms that will be prohibited. The government lists the firearms in the bill, even though it says that the RCMP will draw that list sometime in the future. This makes no sense. We proposed another amendment to fix this.

Lastly, I want to talk about the reference number that will be required for a transaction. This number will be retained and recorded. This government is therefore creating a registry, no matter what it claims.

• (2110)

No matter what the government said, it is bringing back some form of registry through the backdoor.

[English]

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his work on this bill and for his work on the committee.

I wonder if the hon. member could remind us why the Conservative Party put forward an amendment to remove punishment for such offences as making a false statement to procure a licence or to procure customs confirmations, tampering with licences, unauthorized possession of ammunition, non-compliance with a demand to produce a firearm, contravention of conditions of licences, and trafficking in firearms. That was one of the amendments that was put forward.

I was reading comments from Mr. Randall Koops at committee, where he enumerated all the offences for which the Conservatives as a party were putting forward that there be no punishment, yet even after he enumerated them, the Conservative members of the committee voted in favour of that amendment. Of course, we voted against it, because we think there should be penalties for trafficking in firearms.

I wonder if the member could explain to the House why the Conservatives wanted to remove penalties for those offences.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question, but I admit that I do not remember the 45 amendments. Was it a Liberal amendment or a Conservative one? I believe she said it was one of ours, but it was not. Thus, I cannot answer because, unfortunately, I do not remember that amendment.

[English]

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in my riding, North Island—Powell River, there is a lot of serious concern about the bill. I thank all the people from my riding who are sending emails and letters.

One thing that has been brought forward to me is about having access to the gunsmith with one's PAL card. Right now, people could be out using their guns, and if something happens and they are concerned, they have the ability to transport them to a gunsmith to get the issue remedied. However, with the changes in the legislation, one thing that concerns me is that this would be removed.

A lot of people in my riding share the concern about shooting a gun that does not work. It is a live gun. How does one store it to protect one's family or keep it safe when one travels? Then one has to ask to transport it again. Having a live gun in one's home is a major concern.

I wonder if the member has a similar concern, and if there is anything in these amendments that would protect Canadians in this way. Could the member share a little about what he heard in committee?

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. Indeed, what she asked about was one of the 45 amendments that we moved. It does not make sense to legitimate gun owners who will no longer be able to have their guns repaired. They have to do different things, and they always need a reference number or other number to do such and such a thing. We moved an amendment to avoid this type of situation, and the government rejected it.

[English]

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for his obvious knowledge of the bill. He knows the harm that it could do. Again, it would be attacking not gang crimes and the underworld of illegal firearms, but law-abiding firearms owners. That seems to be the pet whipping horse of the government.

The member across the way tried to imply that we were soft on crime, which is absolutely not the case. Everybody in this place knows that.

Why does the member think that the government, once again, instead of doing what it said it would do to fix gang crime, illegal firearms, and that kind of thing, at the end of the day is attacking only law-abiding firearms owners?

• (2115)

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent question. I believe that the answer is a lack of courage. It is easy to go after hunters, sport shooters, people who obey the law, but it is not easy to go after criminal groups. There are many, many ways of illegally bringing guns into the country or procuring guns. We know what the answers are, but there are answers that the government would rather not talk about. I think that there is a lack of courage to admit certain things.

[English]

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise tonight to speak to this important legislation.

During the last election, we made a promise to take pragmatic action to strengthen the laws governing firearms use in Canada. Bill C-71 upholds this commitment to introduce sensible new measures on firearms, and that includes the commitment not to reinstate a federal long-gun registry. From the start, the bill has been guided by the priorities of protecting the public and communities, supporting law enforcement, and ensuring that law-abiding firearms owners are treated fairly and reasonably. I am pleased to note that, through the bill's progress, those priorities were reaffirmed by a broad range of stakeholders, partners, and individual Canadians.

Before the bill was introduced, the government heard from many groups and individuals with diverse experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives. That includes members of the Canadian Firearms Advisory Committee and consultations with many groups, both in person and by phone. In March, the government took the additional step of hosting in Ottawa a national summit on gun and gang violence, with stakeholders and partners from across Canada.

All of this engagement helped to shape not only the bill itself but also the package of new measures complementing it. That package included committing up to \$327.6 million over five years, and \$100 million a year thereafter, to support a variety of initiatives specifically aimed at gang activity and gun crime. Bill C-71 is only one part of the package, but it is a critical part of it. I am pleased to see that it has now been strengthened through the House debates and committee review.

I was personally very pleased to introduce an amendment to the bill in collaboration with my colleague, the MP for Saanich—Gulf Islands, which addresses the need to protect survivors of intimate partner violence and reduce the lethality of suicide attempts. In my research on firearms in Canada, I realized that there were two very important aspects of the firearms debate that were not being talked about enough: intimate partner violence, commonly known as domestic violence, and suicide.

In its 2016 annual report on domestic violence, the Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario reported that 26% of deaths related to intimate partner violence involved a firearm. I also heard from

stakeholders that 80% of all firearms-related deaths in Canada are suicides. Clearly, both of these factors need to be a central part of any conversation around Bill C-71.

I had numerous conversations with many national stakeholders, as well as local stakeholders in my riding, Oakville North—Burlington, which helped shape this amendment, and I would like to thank those who provided thoughtful and important insights.

Specifically, my amendment would add to the criteria that must be considered when determining eligibility to hold a firearms licence. The amendment would add the criteria of threatening conduct and non-contact orders, and add more explicit language around risk of harm to self and to others. Officials confirmed that the amendment would strengthen the criteria around licensing and add greater clarity to existing laws, so that people who are considered to be at risk of harming themselves or others would be prohibited from owning guns.

For example, if a woman has a restraining order against her abusive ex-partner, and the ex-partner legally owns firearms that he uses to threaten her safety, the chief firearms officer would now be explicitly required to take this into consideration when reviewing his eligibility for a licence. The amendment also specifies that violent or threatening conduct can include threats made on social media and other online forums.

To be clear, the amendments specify that, when considering eligibility for a firearms licence, what must also be considered are expired orders prohibiting the possession of firearms where there was an offence in which violence was used, threatened, or attempted against an intimate partner or former intimate partners.

This should reassure Canadians that, in the interest of public safety, the process through which a person could obtain a firearms licence includes a more comprehensive consideration of eligibility factors. Explicitly including the concept of harm on that list, which includes self-harm, may also have important impacts.

It is an absolute tragedy that 80% of firearms deaths in Canada are suicides, and while suicide prevention is a whole-of-society issue, there are meaningful actions we can take through legislation. This is one of those actions. Prevention experts agree that limiting access to guns for those at risk of suicide is part of the solution, along with access to mental health support. I was very proud to introduce the concept of harm through my amendment, so that it is clearly identified in the bill before us.

• (2120)

I will also point out that the additional new criteria introduced in the amendment reflects the types of violence that predominantly target women, for example, harassment and cyberviolence. In the online space, women are often targets of intimidation and propaganda. Young women and girls are impacted disproportionately by cyberviolence, bullying, and harassment. Adding these new factors updates our laws to reflect and address today's realities. It is consistent with the government's gender-based violence strategy.

Other amendments add some clarification to the bill. For example, the committee amended clause 1 to make it clear that the government will not recreate the federal long-gun registry. This was an important amendment put forward by the Conservative public safety critic and accepted by the committee. We now have that clarification right in the text of the bill. Indeed, the member for Red Deer—Lacombe stated during committee proceedings, "Everybody at this table agrees that this is not a registry".

I will point out that the bill never included any components that would have permitted or required the registration of non-restricted firearms. While this amendment does not change the effect of the bill, I am confident it can provide reassurance that the long-gun registry will not be reinstated.

Finally, another amendment to clause 5 adopted at committee will help clarify that a person meeting the conditions to transfer a non-restricted firearm can transfer more than one. In practice, the amendment changes the word "a" in the bill to "one or more". In fact, it is proposed that the bill does not limit the number of non-restricted firearms that can be transferred providing the conditions to do so are met, but once again, the bill is now clearer on this issue. It now spells out specifically that a valid licence and valid reference number attesting to the licence's validity can support the transfer of ownership of one or more non-restricted firearms.

I am grateful that all parties have played an important role in the close scrutiny of this bill. The bill started off on a solid footing. It already strengthened current laws around eligibility to hold a firearms licence. There is a new requirement for licensing authorities to consider specific information from the applicant's history throughout their whole life rather than the previous five years, as was the case prior to Bill C-71.

Bill C-71 improves licence verification, requiring anyone selling or giving a non-restricted firearm to verify the validity of the recipient's firearms licence. It improves record-keeping requirements among firearms businesses, requiring them to keep records of sale for non-restricted firearms. Responsible vendors already do this. However, making it mandatory will not only set in law what they already do, it will also provide police with an additional tool to track non-restricted firearms used by criminals.

The bill strengthens the regime around the transportation of restricted and prohibited firearms. It creates a more consistent approach to classification, responsibly leaving technical determinations on the classification of firearms to experts.

Today we have new measures with added benefits: enhanced background checks, greater certainty that no federal registry will be

created, and welcomed clarification on the transfer of non-restricted firearms.

Canadians from all walks of life have told us this legislation will make a difference. It is one part of a larger package that will help make our communities safer and give law enforcement officers the tools they need to do their job.

I want to thank the members on the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, all those who provided testimony and comment, and my colleagues in the House for helping shape this important legislation along the way.

I want to give special thanks to the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for working with me to ensure that the amendment we put forward was reflective and would ensure that intimate partner violence would be fully recognized in Bill C-71.

I encourage all members to join me in supporting this bill.

• (2125)

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I guess our perceptions of this bill are very different on opposite sides of the House because many of the things the member talked about were already in the legislation, particularly the eligibility with respect to those who have been involved in any kind of domestic violence or a threat to their partners. In the past it revolved around actions and activities that have taken place rather than our own perception. I am wondering if she is talking about trying to prevent suicide, and trying to prevent some of this behaviour.

The amendment that she made lends itself to thinking about perceived conduct, about perceived threats, and perceived harms. I wonder if she can tell me who is going to be making the decisions on whether someone is eligible or not. People who come from outside into a situation often do not know the people. Who is going to be making those decisions? Does she not have a concern that she is not talking about actions here? She used the word "factors" a number of times, these perceived factors. Who is going to be wise enough to be able to put her amendment into action?

Ms. Pam Damoff: Mr. Speaker, the decision continues to rest with the chief firearms officer. Officials from the department who were at our public safety committee meetings confirmed with us, as I mentioned in my speech, that the amendment adds the criteria of threatening conduct. In the past, it was necessary that a conviction be in place. This language broadens that to threatening conduct, non-contact orders like restraining orders, and puts more explicit language around risk of harm to self or others.

Officials confirmed with us that it would strengthen the background check provisions, but it all does continue to rest with the chief firearms officer.

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for the work she has been doing at committee. Throughout the study of this bill, we heard about the challenging issues of suicide and violence against women, and domestic violence in particular. We hope these issues will be addressed with the amendment which I supported.

The member raised an interesting point and I want to hear more about it. It is the notion that sometimes when legislation is being developed one is looking at what could be said for greater certainty. One of the things that Bill C-71 attempts to do, and I think some of these amendments attempt to do, is to essentially take practices that already exist, whether it is background checks or in record-keeping at point of sale, and create certainty in the law so that when law enforcement officers go into a shop, they now can assume it is likely there will be records. The idea now is that with the law they will have more certainty of that.

I would ask the member to comment on the importance of distinguishing between radical new measures and creating certainty in law, which is also an important part of how we work on legislation.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague has put the words together quite well, as he often does. It has been quite a pleasure to work with him at committee.

For greater certainty is exactly what a number of these measures do in the bill, to ensure that law enforcement officers do have the tools they need. Many of these things were being done. In particular with background checks, it has provided greater certainty. In terms of keeping records, as I mentioned, many vendors already do what is being talked about.

My colleague is correct in saying that the bill in front of us is providing greater certainty on what is being done in a number of cases.

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is rather interesting. However, it still leaves me kind of puzzled when we look at all these new pieces in this legislation that actually affect people who are law-abiding firearm owners. It goes after them to put in more bureaucracy and adds more burden in the fact that they own a firearm. The people it does not affect are the true targets who we should be looking at: gangs and rural crime.

Can the member tell me what is in this legislation that will actually have an impact on gangs and their access to guns, and rural crime and the access to guns?

Ms. Pam Damoff: Mr. Speaker, I keep hearing the term "law-abiding gun owners". I appreciate that the majority of people who own firearms are law-abiding gun owners. Marc Lepine, who killed 14 women at École Polytechnique, also had a firearms licence. Alexandre Bissonnette, who killed six men in the mosque in Quebec City, had a valid firearms licence. We talk about law-abiding firearms owners. A lot of the times they are, until they are not.

This legislation will go a long way in protecting Canadians for public safety. I am very proud of what is in this bill and where it is going to go. I appreciate the members who have been supporting this bill, and what we are trying to do to improve public safety for Canadians.

• (2130)

[Translation]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise again to speak to Bill C-71. There is no denying that this issue has been stirring up a lot of emotion in Canada for many years, and for good reason.

Organizations such as PolySeSouvient and victims of horrific gun crimes are advocating for gun control and courageously lending their voices to the political process to talk about that. I must say that in communities represented by members in the House from all parties, there are law-abiding gun owners. They have legal permits and use them to hunt or sport shoot. They do not want to be targeted by the legislation being passed, and we are trying not to target them. Ultimately, as parliamentarians, we have a duty to pass legislation that ensures public safety. Doing that work and finding the right balance is not always easy.

I would like to explore certain elements of Bill C-71, as well as the debate overall, which will be challenging. First of all, I want to thank everyone who appeared before the committee, especially those who represent victims' groups. Every time we study an issue, whether it be impaired driving legislation or crime and punishment legislation, victims' advocacy groups always appear. After enduring these horrific crimes, these individuals have the courage to speak publicly about their point of view and participate in the legislative process, which is already intimidating enough. I have to give them credit. I think they deserve a tremendous amount of admiration and respect.

One way to show our respect is to actually listen to them. I feel like we did listen to them in our study of this bill. As my Liberal colleague just said, that is why we adopted an amendment to try to establish enhanced criteria for background checks. I think all parties in the House agree that if we have the best background check process we possibly can, every law-abiding citizen should easily pass it. This would allow them to get a licence, and Canadians could rest assured that we are making every effort to ensure public safety.

In the same vein, that is why we support the measures to make the background check cover the applicant's entire lifetime. This is already being done on a de facto basis anyway, I might add. The courts have ruled in several cases that, despite the existing five-year time frame, there is a discretionary authority to examine the applicant's entire life. We think it is only appropriate that this be included in the legislation. That said, we also need to look at recording keeping by firearms dealers and sellers.

[English]

It is important to note that when it comes to the point of sale records, this is something that existed before from the 1970s to the 1990s, and it is something that even opponents of the long-gun registry referred to. I am thinking in particular of testimony in 2012 before the public safety committee of the then Calgary police chief, Rick Hanson. He was brought to committee to express his opposition to the long-gun registry. He specifically said that with the elimination of the long-gun registry, it would be important to bring back the point of sale records which would allow police, with a warrant, to obtain that information which, as we heard at committee, all respectable sales folks and businesses already keep at any rate.

It is the law in the U.S. as well. In fact, it is important to note that in the United States, contrary to what is proposed in Bill C-71, records would be kept for a lifetime, indefinitely essentially, whereas Bill C-71 prescribes a 20-year period. I see some distinctions there as well. It is seen as a relatively reasonable measure that allows police to have the tools they need to ensure public safety.

• (2135)

When it comes to an individual selling a firearm to another individual, some concerns were brought forward at committee, most notably, the reference number that would be given when an individual with a non-restricted firearm had to go through the process of ensuring the person to whom he or she was selling had a valid PAL. In that process, it is important to note that one of the concerns was the use of "singular" in the legislation, which essentially led some folks to believe there would be a reference number for each firearm being sold in a single transaction. Therefore, if one individual were selling three firearms to another individual, there would be one reference number generated for each firearm.

Officials reassured us that based on the Interpretation Act in Canadian law, when "singular" was used, it could mean plural unless otherwise specified. That being said, I brought forward an amendment, which was unanimously adopted by the committee, to add for greater certainty "one or more firearms" to ensure that only one reference number would be generated per transaction and to make it clear that the reference number would be generated for the purposes of PAL verification and not to track individual firearms and be perceived or portrayed as any sort of backdoor registry.

[Translation]

The other element that we must closely examine is the issuance of permits for transporting guns, the automatic permits, which Bill C-71 would change significantly. We are still opposed to automatic renewal, as we were in the previous Parliament with Bill C-42. The change being made by the Liberals is appropriate.

That said, we heard some powerful testimony concerning the ability to renew a permit automatically to transport a gun to a gun repair shop. It is extremely important because witnesses explained that having a firearm that is damaged or not operational can be a threat to public safety. Consequently, allowing gun owners to travel to an authorized repair shop would be just as appropriate as allowing them to transport a firearm from the point of purchase to the place where the gun will be stored or to a shooting range. Unfortunately, the amendment was rejected. We will continue to support this proposal in the hope that the amendment may be made in future.

[English]

The question of gang violence, as raised by the Conservatives, is a legitimate one. I do not think anyone will go that far in this direction, but it is important to understand, especially if the government says that this would be the tonic solution. I do not believe, in good faith, that is what has been presented to us. The issue of gang violence is a complex one. One piece of legislation will not resolve it and the New Democrats believe more needs to be done to tackle this. We need to tackle trafficking at the border. I know the member for Windsor West has done extraordinary work in this direction, as a member of Parliament representing a border community.

We need to do more to fight radicalization. When we think of radicalization, we think of terrorism, but we also need to look at street gangs. Street gangs prey on vulnerable youth and recruit them. That is a form of radicalization as well, and more needs to be done to tackle that.

The member for Lakeland brought forward a fantastic motion on rural crime, which the New Democrats were pleased to support, and we were pleased she supported our amendment as well. It will be before the public safety committee as part of that study. We need to look at ensuring the RCMP has the resources to tackle rural crime. Firearm theft, unfortunately, is part of that reality from some of what we have heard.

There are obviously a lot of complex issues going on and certainly, on that front, the Conservatives are absolutely correct in raising that issue and ensuring that more needs to be done to take on that issue. We will be pleased to look at that as well, because it is an important public safety issue. No one is denying that and we will continue to work in that direction.

• (2140)

[Translation]

Although the criticism that we must do more to address gang violence is legitimate, we support certain measures. A bill concerning firearms must respect the victims who are always asking us to do more. They have experienced horrific crimes and want to ensure that they live in safe communities. We must respect the law-abiding gun owners and communities affected by this kind of legislation. I believe that we achieved this at our committee meetings.

I hope that we will be able to continue to move in that direction. The current dynamic on issues like this, where all parties are contributing to a toxic debate, is unlikely to ensure public safety or to earn the respect of the communities that demand it on a file as emotional as this one.

I am proud, as a New Democrat, to be able to continue to work with all of the stakeholders involved in this file and to support the bill in the meantime. There is still a lot of work to be done by everyone.

[English]

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to my colleague. I have enormous respect for the work he has done at committee on this complicated file and in representing a coherent policy on public safety and a credible balance for the rights of gun owners.

One of the things that has not really been talked about when we hear the Conservatives relentlessly attacking gun policy in the country is the issue of suicide, particularly the male use of firearms. In the United States, the single largest cause of death by a firearm is suicide not homicide.

It comes to the question of background checks. I recently had my gun licence renewed, but before it was reissued to me, my wife was called for a check on the family. I remember my wife called me, telling me how pleased she was. We often think of it in the frame of domestic violence, which is an important frame.

People who may have been lifelong gun owners and have become unemployed can suffer from depression and can turn their gun on themselves and sometimes on their own family members. This needs to be considered when we talk about people renewing their licences. A person may be a licenced owner for years, but he or she should be checked.

I would like to ask my colleague for his thoughts on the importance of having proper background checks in order to minimize family violence, self-harm, and unnecessary deaths through gun violence.

[Translation]

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question and for the work that he does.

He knows better than I do the importance of striking a balance on this file and of expressing Canadians' legitimate concerns on both sides of the debate. In the spirit of what he said, that is exactly the type of thing we heard in committee. We heard some powerful testimony about the number of suicides committed with firearms in this country.

The Association québécoise de prévention du suicide presented an extremely important viewpoint. The association's representative talked about how people intending to commit suicide start to question their decision as the moment approaches. Depending on the method they choose, if their attempt fails, there is a good chance that they will not try again. However, those who try to commit suicide with a firearm are more likely to succeed in their attempt and will not have the opportunity to reconsider and get their lives back on track. That is something extremely important to consider. As my colleague mentioned, domestic violence is also a very important consideration.

From what I heard in committee, the three major parties agree that if we can do more to ensure solid background checks, then we should. Everyone agrees on that. What is being proposed is appropriate, but we can always look at additional measures.

[English]

Mr. Randy Hobbak (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask my colleague the same question I asked the member of the Liberal Party.

It looks to me like the government is targeting law-abiding gun owners with this legislation. The government is forcing them to take extra steps in order to have a long gun or a rifle.

What would this legislation do for rural crime or crime by gangs that do not go through this process? What is in the bill that would address that issue, which it is meant to do?

• (2145)

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Mr. Speaker, as I said, both in my question for the member for Oakville North—Burlington and in my presentation, when we look at legislation, sometimes we codify things that are already done. Background checks over a lifetime in many cases is already done but codifying that in law is important.

As I mentioned, on point of sale records, many folks in the policing community have called for this, under a warrant, and that is also an important thing.

I said something else in my speech which is important for the member to note. He mentioned gang violence. We absolutely agree with the Conservatives that more needs to be done to tackle this issue. These two things are not mutually exclusive. We call on the government to do more to tackle that. We would be proud to work with all parties to ensure we do more about that.

The measures in the bill would create greater certainty for things that currently already happen under the law but would give that greater certainty for police among others.

Hon. Robert Nault (Kenora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since my colleague was in the House last term, could he comment on the private member's Bill C-442, which was tabled by the Conservative MP James Moore in 2003?

One of the things I keep hearing about is mental health, the issues surrounding mental health, and the reasons why the five-year check on individuals' backgrounds should be extended for a lifetime because of the ability to find out whether people are mentally stable to own firearms.

As we all know, if we watch what is going on in the U.S., there is a conversation going on about those mass killings of individuals who may have firearms legally, but have not had the background check done on them. I am curious to hear what the member's comments would be as it relates to that.

[Translation]

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. Indeed, the way I understood the comments in committee, all parties agreed that we should have a solid background check process. In the same vein, we heard some disturbing comments in committee, so I think that it is important to differentiate between someone with severe mental health problems and someone who has a criminal record for stealing candy from a corner store. Discretion still exists in the system, even with Bill C-71. It is an important distinction to make in order to truly understand that serious mental health problems, or other problems that can make it difficult to obtain a permit, are very different from a youthful misstep. The public service has very much understood that distinction.

BILL C-71—NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise that agreements could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Orders 78(1) or 78(2) with respect to the report stage and third reading stage of Bill C-71, an act to amend certain acts and regulations in relation to firearms.

Under the provisions of Standing Order 78(3), I give notice that a minister of the crown will propose at the next sitting a motion to allot a specific number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of proceedings at those stages.

The Deputy Speaker: I am sure the House appreciates being notified of that by the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

[English]

Mr. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I just want a little clarity on this. Could you confirm that the government House leader just got up and proposed time allocation on Bill C-71, the bill on firearms, which we are speaking about right now. Is that what happened? The government is limiting—

The Deputy Speaker: Essentially, the government House leader has just given notice and essentially what is the background and the rationale for that notice, which will apply at some point later on in the deliberations.

The House resumed consideration of C-71, An Act to amend certain Acts and Regulations in relation to firearms as reported (with amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

Hon. Robert Nault (Kenora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a rural member of Parliament, it is extremely important for members like me to get an opportunity to speak on legislation that always has an impact, or is perceived to have an impact, in regions like ours. I represent what I think is the sixth-largest riding in Canada and the largest riding in Ontario, with one-third of Ontario's land mass. Hunting and the tradition of owning firearms is a well-known fact in the region that I represent.

In order to get a better sense of the sensitivity and difficulties in these kinds of debates between rural members and urban members of Parliament, I want to take us back a bit in history to get a better understanding of why these things can be complicated.

Since I came to Parliament in 1988, I have had the opportunity to be a part of the debate of two major pieces of legislation. These were major pieces of legislation dealing with firearms. There were three in fact, but one was pulled under the Mulroney government in 1990. There were difficulties going on in the caucus of the day in that particular Conservative government for members of Parliament. Bill C-80 was the bill, and it came in under Justice Minister Kim Campbell. She introduced it in June 1990. Interestingly, that particular piece of legislation created a gun registry for all guns in Canada. It was such a difficult debate within the rural caucus and the urban caucus of the government of Brian Mulroney that they waited for months and months before they started to debate it. They then waited for the prorogation of the House, so they could start over. Therefore, Bill C-80 disappeared. In its place, Bill C-17 came into

being. Bill C-17 was also under Justice Minister Kim Campbell, and it was enacted into legislation in November of 1991.

In case people were not aware, in case they want to see how gun legislation has been created over the last 40 or 50 years, this is the piece of legislation where practically everything we are debating today was brought into play, from the possession certificates, the waiting periods, and the background checks. All these things happened under Bill C-17 in the Mulroney government.

I want to give a list of a few things that happened during this process. Applicants for a firearms acquisition certificate were required to provide more background information, including personal history, criminal history, a picture, and two references. Some of the impacts of Bill C-17 were that approximately 200 gun models moved to restricted and prohibited lists. There were limits on magazine size. If we can imagine, years ago we could have very large magazines. Now they are restricted, so that has made a significant difference in how we perceive firearms today. Firearms and ammo must be stored separately. Ammunition, before Bill C-17, was basically in the same box as one's firearm was stored. One had to keep weapons in an operable condition. One had to hide and lock guns during transportation. A 28-day waiting period was imposed for issuing of permits, which is a discussion that is still going on in the United States. It is one where it is hard to imagine how people are having difficulty understanding the importance of it. Then there was the grandfathering of automatic weapons. Of course, the big discussion of that day was whether we should or should not ban semi-automatics.

There is a history as it relates to these kinds of firearms, and the whole issue of firearms and safety of people around the world. Here in Canada, as a society that believes and will continue to believe that firearms have a legitimate use, the debate has always been a difficult one.

• (2150)

I used the example of what happened in the Mulroney regime to make it clear that in those days, rural members of Parliament were arguing with urban members of Parliament in the same government as to what to do and what not to do. Here is something that members should know. Bill C-17 passed by a margin of 189 to 14. In fact, the vote was whipped very strongly in the Mulroney government. There were a lot of people who were absent that day, because the Liberal Party of the day, and that caucus, voted with the government. However, many of the Conservative members of Parliament decided to be absent that day, because it was that kind of debate. Therefore, I agree with the member in the NDP who spoke before me. It would be much more helpful if we could have a debate where it was not so partisan and was not used as a wedge issue, but in fact we would spend some time talking about what is good for Canada.

I want to go back to another piece of legislation, because I want to remind members of Parliament that Bill C-51 was passed in 1978. In 1978, gun legislation was passed that brought in record-keeping by vendors. The record-keeping by vendors, the one we were talking about, which the Tories across the way are saying is a backdoor registry, has existed since 1978. The reason it came out was that when we brought in Bill C-68, the long-gun registry and the other changes, there was no need for the vendor registry, as we put it, a recording, because the registry was going to be individual persons. That was the way each gun would be recorded. However, that came out of the bill for the reason of it being a different way of looking at firearms and the firearms process.

I have been doing this for a number of years now, sitting here as a rural member of Parliament having a discussion about firearms, and trying to bring some sensibility. It is not to score political points, but to make it clear that we need to have laws, and we need to have a gun registry that makes sense. We need to have firearms laws that work or do not work, but the reality is that we need to have some sort of regulation as it relates to firearms.

The reason I am supporting this proposed legislation is because Bill C-71 would bring in a change on the five-year limitation. That would allow the CFO to consider an applicant's entire history. I think one of our major concerns in today's gun scenario, and we see it in the U.S. and in Canada, is that there are a lot of mental issues with people who have firearms. When we think about individuals who have firearms and mental issues, and I am talking about the U.S. now, we can think about what happened to those kids who died in that school. They say that those individuals died because the perpetrator was unstable. It was not because he had a firearm, but because he was unstable. Therefore, I think that this proposed legislation would go a long way to improving the ability for us to keep that particular scenario under control.

As we discuss this proposed legislation and the issues that surround it, we have to make sure we put in legislation that benefits society and is not overly difficult for firearms owners. I think this proposed legislation would do that very clearly, and that is why I will be supporting it.

• (2155)

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there was a bit of outrage on this side of the House a moment ago. I could not believe I heard the words issued by the member opposite saying that there were a lot of mental issues among firearms owners. I hope that phrase gets clipped and put out there among the millions of law-abiding firearms owners in Canada. That is absolutely insane.

What really troubles me was the member talking about having laws that make sense. We introduced common-sense firearms legislation in the last parliamentary session, and now the government is going to turn it around and create a backdoor gun registry. There is no doubt about that. The bill talks about a registry multiple times, but it never talks about gangs, violence, and illegal use of firearms.

Why is the government in the bill before us not addressing the gang violence issues and the things that really need to be taken care of, instead of attacking law-abiding firearms owners in Canada?

• (2200)

Hon. Robert Nault: Mr. Speaker, as I said before, it is pretty clear that the Conservatives have been using this issue as a wedge issue to raise funds, for example, to make money.

I want to read something for the members across the way. This was a unanimous amendment to the legislation at committee. I understand that it was a Tory amendment: "For greater certainty nothing in this Act shall be construed so as to permit or require the registration of non-restricted firearms."

I do not know how many times we have to go down this road of saying that it is not a gun registry. As I said before, the mental health issue was brought forward by Conservative MP James Moore in a private member's bill. It was felt that it would be good for the chief firearms officer to be able to go beyond five years to look at the whole issue of mental health, because it is an issue in our society.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my friend took painstaking lengths to talk about how there has been a rural and urban divide in debate on firearms. However, never did the debate get so unfair and so divisive than under Allan Rock, his cabinet colleague from the Chrétien government. They proposed the long-gun registry as a tool for public safety, and used images and language that demonized lawful owners, including owners in Kenora, northern Ontario, across this country. To have a PAL and have the right and responsibility that comes with firearms ownership, they have to be the most law-abiding citizens.

I hate when Liberal MPs take tragic events in the United States or a tragic gang shooting in Toronto, and suggest we need to do a long-gun registry, or the backdoor store registry as a means of public safety.

The Liberals are implying that sport shooters, hunters, and lawful owners are the problem. The problem is illegally smuggled weapons from the United States, and nothing in the bill touches that. Similar to Allan Rock, we see again the Liberals demonizing law-abiding people, and not standing up for the rights and responsibilities of people in their own ridings.

Hon. Robert Nault: Mr. Speaker, I do not think the member has been around long enough to have seen the divisive debate that took place in the Mulroney government. It was a sight to behold from the opposition, to the point where every day one of the members would come to me looking to find a way to deal with this as a rural member in a very urban caucus. That is what happens when we are in government. We have a very urban caucus because there are not as many rural members, so it is a divisive debate. We all agree with that, but that is not what we are debating tonight.

I was making the point that no matter who brings forward legislation, whether it is the Conservatives, the Liberals, or the NDP, it always will be divisive when it comes to firearms, because of the rural component versus the urban view of firearms.

My view is that this is a good piece of legislation. It has virtually no effect on law-abiding gun owners. This is intended to improve the ability to do background checks on people who should not own firearms because of mental issues.

In the United States, almost every week, we see massive killings, because people should not own firearms because they are not mentally competent to do so. That is what this legislation does. That is why the opposition members should vote for it. It makes a difference in—

The Deputy Speaker: At the end of the five minutes, I will remind members that when the speech has been presented from one side of the House, the preference is given to the opposite side for questions and comments. If there is time, certainly I will come back to the party of the member who has just delivered their remarks. However, I have noticed members who are standing and will endeavour to make sure they get an opportunity to participate.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Red Deer—Lacombe.

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was astounded that my colleague from Kenora would actually accuse someone like me of having mental health issues, because I am one of the law-abiding firearms owners he is talking about. On the fact that he is suggesting that changes to the law made in Bill C-71 would address the issues in the United States, I might suggest that he would be better off pursuing a Congress seat than representing the fine folks in Kenora. To imply that making the changes we need to make here in Canada is the result of U.S. legislative policies is simply misguided.

I wish I actually did not have to rise in the House today to talk about this. I wish that the public safety committee, when the current government first took office, had been tasked with actually going across Canada and talking to people. If we were going to have a serious conversation about creating a safer Canada and increasing public safety, we could have had a thoughtful discussion. We could have had a less partisan discussion on this issue. Instead, the bill just came out of the blue. Bill C-71 came late in the mandate of the government after several years of trying to get electoral reform through. The Liberals cannot pass their marijuana legislation without the Senate pushing it back. They are trying to rig the election system again through Bill C-76.

This is where we are at. We are three years into a four-year mandate, ramming legislation through with a handful of hours at second reading, one meeting with the minister and bureaucrats at committee, and three more meetings with a handful of witnesses, a mere fraction of the number of people and organizations that wanted to be represented and have their voices heard. Now we just had notice from the government House leader that the Liberals are going to move time allocation, not only at the report stage of this bill but also at third reading, making sure that the voices that are reasonable and need to be heard will not be so that they can push through what can only be described as an emotionally based agenda when it comes to firearms.

There is not a single member of Parliament in this place who would not do the right thing if given the right options and good advice and empirical evidence to suggest that the legislation was going to improve safety for Canadians. If that actually happened, if that was the approach the government had actually taken, we might have come up with some legislation that had unanimous support. In fact, my colleague from Kenora who just spoke suggested the mental health side of things. There is nothing in Bill C-71 that would actually address mental health issues. There is nothing in Bill C-71

that would address any co-operation between federal investigators, law enforcement agencies, or firearms officers and anything to with any of the provincial mental health acts.

Here is why this bill is so offensive to the law-abiding firearms community. The Liberals say that nothing about this is a firearms registry. Nothing could be further from the truth. In a previous life, before I came here, I was a tenured faculty member at Red Deer College teaching systems analysis and design. I was a database architect and a database administrator before I came here. I understand information technology. I understand how to cross-reference information. Whether it is a distributed computing system or the technology we have today, with clouds of information out there, it is very easy.

The bureaucrats, the minister, and the police officers who came before the committee made it painstakingly obvious to anyone who was paying attention that with Bill C-71, every time there was a transaction and a firearm changed hands, whether through a sale, an estate inheritance, a gift, or lending or borrowing, Canadians would have to get permission from the government. If they were at a gun show on the weekend, if they were going to Cabela's, if they were selling a firearm to their neighbour, or if they were lending their rifle to their hunting buddy to go on a trip and were not on that trip too, they would have to get permission from the government to do this first.

Here is how this would work. The Liberal government today says that it is going to have someone on staff, 24/7, 365 days a year, to pick up the phone when the buyer and seller want to have a transaction. The Liberals' original legislation actually said that for every firearm that was going to be transacted, they would need a separate reference number. This is a registry, because there would be the seller's licence and the buyer's licence.

Here is my buyer's licence. It is a document. It has my licence number, my name, my address, and the type of licence I have. Every one of those reference numbers is going to transact the serial number, make, and model of that firearm, to be cross-referenced with distributed store records. I specifically asked the bureaucrats how this would work, and they said it would be no trouble for the central transaction database, with all the reference numbers, to easily go back to a store and find out where a firearm was originally purchased.

• (2205)

If I buy a firearm from Cabela's or another store, and I choose to sell that firearm to a hunting buddy, who then sells that firearm to someone else, and that firearm is stolen and used in a crime, the police would have the ability to implicate me and everyone in that entire chain of sales in the act that was eventually done by a criminal, rather than focusing on that criminal.

If I sold 40, 50, or 100 firearms in one transaction as a single individual and not as a business, maybe that would trigger some kind of threshold and someone would ask what was going on. Was it an estate dispersal? Was I getting rid of all my firearms? That might have done something to increase public safety, but unfortunately, this bill would not do anything.

As a matter of fact, all it would do is create more red tape, more bureaucracy, and more expense. It would make gun shows on weekends that Canadians participate in more difficult. When I asked the bureaucrats what would happen for a large gun show in Canada, they said they would need a few weeks' notice. Now it would be up to every gun show organizer in this country to let the firearms centre know that on a weekend, it would have to staff up. Do members know how many gun shows there are in Canada? Virtually every weekend of the year there is one somewhere in Canada.

We did not talk to anyone. We did not talk to any gun show organizers. We did not hear from anyone from the Canadian Sporting Arms and Ammunition Association, which is in the retail business. None of those organizations were brought in to testify before the committee so that the government would have an opportunity to understand what it was it was going to do.

Bill C-71 would create a registry of firearms transactions, to be maintained by the firearms centre, which would be cross-referenced with all the records that would now be mandatory for store owners to keep for a period of 20 years or more. The period would be 20 years or more, because the legislation does not say for just 20 years. It says that if Canada acceded to an international treaty that required Canadians to store the records for even longer, it would be automatic in law that those records would need to be kept longer. It would not even come back before Parliament.

We have discovered that Canada is already involved in negotiating one of those treaties, so it is very convenient that the legislation would be there so that we could keep the records even longer.

It is a \$3-billion boondoggle. We have not had a single government official say how much more the government is going to spend on the firearms centre to ramp up the staff to keep track of the new gun registry.

Classification is another thing that frustrates firearms owners. Bill C-42, the Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act, actually put the decisions back in the hands of elected representatives so that at least there was some recourse for law-abiding firearms owners who, by the stroke of a pen, went from one day being law-abiding firearms owners to the next day being in possession of prohibited property.

The Liberals could have adopted a very simple fix. We simply suggested taking it out of the hands of one individual and creating a panel. I put a recommendation before the committee to have five technical experts, including police, military, and civilian experts, advise us, thereby depoliticizing the issue altogether. In this way, it would not be in the hands of one entity or in the hands of politicians. We could get a panel of actual experts to make those recommendations and fix the rules.

We know that there are three basic criteria for handguns: rimfire, centrefire, barrel length, and so on. These criteria tell us if a firearm is restricted or prohibited. There is nothing that prescriptive in the

long-gun classification system. It is very subjective, and that is the problem with the rules. The minister says that it can hide behind the RCMP, because the RCMP simply has to follow the rules, but the rules are not clear. They are very subjective. It is very frustrating.

Last but not least is the notion of licensing. As my colleague from Kenora rightly pointed out, if we go back to the passage of legislation in 1977, there are firearms owners in Canada who have had licences for almost 40 years. They would now, when they went to renew their licences, have to answer for everything they did back when they 18 years old, some 20 years before 1977, for example, as if the mental health issues from 60 years ago were going to be the basis for denying them a licence. Mark my words, someone is going to go back and dredge this up, and a current law-abiding firearms owner who has had a licence for 30 or 40 years is going to be denied a licence. Do members know how to appeal that? A person has to make an application before a court. A person has to hire a lawyer, go before a court, and get a judge to overrule the decision of the chief firearms officer.

We provided an amendment at committee, which the Liberals shot down. As a matter of fact, it was an amendment proposed by a rural Liberal member from Ontario, who suggested that we create a system of appeal so that law-abiding firearms owners were not caught up in being denied their licences if they had had them for a number of years.

• (2210)

I could go on for another couple of hours about the failures of Bill C-71, but my time is up, so I will happily answer any of the misguided questions the Liberals have for me.

• (2215)

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member mentioned, implied, in fact, that individuals should not be held accountable for the acts they carried out when they were 18 years old. He referenced a specific age. What if an individual happened to commit an act of violence, say domestic abuse against a wife or abuse against a child? Should that not be taken into account when assessing whether someone should have a gun licence?

Mr. Blaine Calkins: Mr. Speaker, it shows just how much my hon. colleague, who sits on the committee, does not understand about the continuous eligibility criteria that every firearms owner in Canada already has. Every day, every firearms-licensed owner in Canada is checked. If the police go to a domestic dispute or if any court issues an order against a person for committing any type of crime, it is automatically flagged in the firearms system. The next day, that individual will get a knock on the door, the police will show up, and if the person has firearms in the house, they will confiscate them until the issue is resolved. The fact that the member does not know that means that there are very serious problems with Bill C-71.

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I found it very interesting to hear what the member across the way had to say, particularly what he construed as a registry when looking at the handling of business records. He also mentioned different amendments that were not accepted. What he did not mention was an amendment proposed by the Conservatives, if anyone wants to check the record, which was unanimously accepted. In fact, my friend across the way voted in favour of it. It specifically stated, as an addition to the Firearms Act, "For greater certainty, nothing in this Act shall be construed so as to permit or require the registration of non-restricted firearms."

How does my friend suddenly construe from this legislation something that he himself voted for and say that it cannot be construed in that way?

Mr. Blaine Calkins: Mr. Speaker, my colleague does not have her facts straight. The day that amendment went through at committee, I was at the Stittsville range for shooting day, where I won top marksman, so I could not have possibly been at the committee. She actually said I was. If she cannot even get her facts straight on where I was on a particular day, I am sure she has no credibility on the rest of the file.

Mr. Gagan Sikand (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I currently have a gun licence, both unrestricted and restricted, and I have friends who go to the range quite often.

What does the member have against the RCMP being entrusted with classifying what would be prohibited, restricted, or otherwise?

Mr. Blaine Calkins: Mr. Speaker, I do not have a problem with the RCMP being involved in this process at all. I have said this publicly many times. Should the RCMP be consulted, with their technical expertise, about the classification of firearms? Absolutely, it should. Should other police officers or agencies perhaps be involved? Yes, they should. Should someone from the military be involved? Some of the issues we heard at committee were that some people are confused about what a firearm is, what an assault firearm is, and what a military firearm is versus a civilian-use firearm. Even though they might look the same, they are not the same at all. Should we have a military expert involved? Yes. Should there be civilian experts on that panel? Should there be a panel of five? I put the amendment forward. The reason I wanted to do that was to protect the integrity of the RCMP, because I have a lot of respect for the RCMP. I actually wanted to join the RCMP at one point in my career.

I do not have a problem with this. If the Liberals do not want politicians to make the decisions, and the Conservatives do not think the people who enforce the law should be the ones making the law,

let us find some common ground through having a panel of five technical experts to go through this process and make recommendations on not only what the classification rules should be but on what the ultimate classifications are. That would depoliticize this and would win the trust of most firearms owners in Canada. I do not know why that reasonable amendment was turned down by the member's colleagues.

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.):

[Member spoke in Cree]

[English]

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak today.

[Translation]

The people of Winnipeg Centre believe in effective gun control measures that prioritize public safety and also ensure that law-abiding gun owners are treated fairly. During its last term, the Conservative government loosened gun laws through a series of legislative and regulatory amendments. Astonishingly, Canada has seen an increase in gun violence in the past three years.

The Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security proposed a number of significant amendments and accepted amendments from all recognized parties. A Conservative amendment even help reassure people that this was not a long-gun registry.

In 2016, there were 223 gun-related homicides in Canada, 44 more than in the previous year. This is an increase of 23%, the highest increase since 2005. In 2016, guns were the most common murder weapon used in this country. Between 2013 and 2016, the number of domestic violence cases involving a firearm increased from 447 to 586.

We proposed a suite of measures, each one directly related to strengthening public safety and security. These measures will keep firearms out of the hands of criminals and help police locate firearms that have been used to commit crimes. That means Bill C-71 is very important, because it will help save lives and solve crimes.

Bill C-71 will improve background checks for people applying to obtain or renew a firearms licence. It will also require firearms sellers to check whether the buyer is authorized to own a firearm, and it will tighten up the rules governing the transportation of restricted and prohibited firearms.

• (22%)

[English]

It is always fun to have the chance to speak some French in the House.

The 2015 Liberal Party platform made nine specific commitments related to firearms. Bill C-71 includes the platform commitments that require legislative changes. These include repealing changes made by Bill C-42 that allow restricted and prohibited weapons to be freely transported without a permit, and putting decision-making about weapons restrictions back in the hands of police and not politicians. It is time to have the experts actually doing the work, not politicians as it was under the Harper Conservatives. We are also looking to require enhanced background checks for anyone seeking to purchase a handgun or other restricted firearms. We are going to require purchasers of firearms to show a licence when they buy a gun, and require all sellers of firearms to confirm that the licence is valid before completing the sale. We are going to require firearms vendors to keep records of all firearms inventory and sales to assist police in investigating firearms trafficking and other gun crimes. We will not create a new national long-gun registry to replace the one that had been dismantled.

In my riding of Winnipeg Centre, gang crime is an important issue. It is something that goes hand in hand with this legislation. In fact, as part of our commitment to make it harder for criminals to get and use handguns and assault weapons, and to reduce gang and gun violence in Canada, our government has announced up to \$327 million over five years and \$100 million annually thereafter in new funding to help support a variety of initiatives to reduce gun crime and criminal gang activities.

The Government of Canada also brought together experts, practitioners, front-line personnel, and decision-makers for a summit on criminal guns and gangs in March 2018. The criminal guns and gangs summit is an unprecedented national summit on the challenges, solutions, and best practices in the fight against gun crime, and in combatting the deadly effects of gangs and illegal guns in communities across Canada, especially in communities like Winnipeg Centre. The government heard from key stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments, community and mental health organizations, indigenous groups, and government and non-governmental organizations.

I would like to quote my good friend, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness:

Too many young people have been killed and too many communities have been harmed by gun crime and gun violence. It doesn't have to be this way. By working together, we can make our communities safer through greater enforcement, collaboration and prevention. The federal government is making major new investments to tackle this scourge and will bring all levels of government and our partners together to confront this problem at the Summit on Criminal Guns and Gangs.

I have already talked about some of the crime that has been going on with guns in this country, and the increase in the number of gun crimes that have been happening. However, we have also seen an increase in the number of incidents of organized crime. For instance, between 2012 and 2016, there was an increase in murders of 17%, in

manslaughter of 12%, in extortion of 74%, and in human trafficking of 300%.

The meth crisis especially is expanding, facilitated by organized crime groups. The production, trafficking, and sale of illicit drugs, such as fentanyl, are often the main cause of gun and gang violence. We are taking action on that not only with this program of \$327 million, but we are also ensuring that we have a bill, Bill C-71, which is trying to bring a balanced and equitable approach to what we can do and how we can work together.

I had the opportunity to read about some of the issues that are going on. We have enhanced background checks. We will ensure there is licence verification. We will ensure that record-keeping is done by vendors to be able to trace firearms used in crimes. I was looking online and I noticed that, for instance, pharmacies have to keep records for 10 years related to drug use and patients' records and who gets prescription drugs in our country. I think it is okay if we ensure that vendors actually keep some records so that if the police need them when a crime is committed we can ensure that they have the full story about what is going on.

I would also like to talk about weapons classifications. Firearms are classified as prohibited, restricted, or for anything that does not fall within those two categories, non-restricted. The Criminal Code apparently lays out the criteria for what technical aspects of a firearm make it either prohibited or non-restricted, and the associated regulations directly list several dozen models. The RCMP is tasked with analyzing new firearms and firearm variants to determine which classification they will have under the criteria passed by Parliament.

In the spring of 2015, Bill C-42 of the Stephen Harper Conservatives granted the Governor in Council, or cabinet, the ability to overrule the variant classifications made by the experts, the RCMP, and to downgrade the classifications of firearms. This was done for two groups of firearms, the CZ 858 and the Swiss Arms rifles. As a former member of the 22nd Regiment, that is very concerning to me, because when we look at a CZ 858, it is a submachine gun. It resembles an AK-47. This is a weapon that has been used in the Vietnam War, in the war in Afghanistan by the Czechoslovakian army, and in the Libyan civil war. I do not think this type of weapon should be involved in hunting, as we should have respect for animals. I know most hunters have a great respect for hunting because it is a good thing to go out onto the land to provide for one's family. However, I do not believe that a weapon that resembles an AK-47, and has been used in armed conflicts around the world, is perhaps an appropriate weapon to have in our country. Individuals who own these weapons as of June 30, 2018 will be grandfathered. The government will offer a three-year amnesty to provide owners of affected firearms with time to come into compliance with the grandfathering requirements. During the amnesty period, owners will be authorized to possess but not use their firearms until licensing and registration requirements are met.

There is an awful lot to cover, but I would like to talk about one final thing before the opposition can try to tear me apart. There were 1,200 Grant Park students who walked out of class on March 14, just around the time of the summit. They walked out of class because they wanted to raise the issue of gun violence in their community. They were upset with the propositions put forward by many politicians who refused to acknowledge that there is gun violence in our country, and who have not proposed adequate solutions. This is why I am very proud of what we are trying to do, which is to strike that balance not only with respect to legislative changes, which are simply reasonable changes, which is not a long-gun registry, and ensuring that we have good records in case a criminal investigation needs to be undertaken, and also having programs to ensure that we provide our youth and those who are most vulnerable an ability not to become involved in gangs and criminal activity.

• (2225)

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, law-abiding firearms owners have to go through a rigorous screening and education process in order to obtain a licence to possess firearms in Canada.

I wonder if my colleague has obtained his possession and acquisition licence, and if he could give a technical description to the House of Commons on the two firearms that he listed in Canada, their usage in gang-related violence in Canada, and how many people who are law-abiding firearms owners use those, as opposed to people who own them for their farms or use them as tools in rural communities. Perhaps he could actually go through, step by step, the processes required for a law-abiding firearms owner to acquire the weapons that he mentioned in his comments.

• (2230)

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette: Mr. Speaker, in fact I have never owned a firearm personally. I have only used a firearm while I was in the Canadian Armed Forces. I know how to take apart a C7 or a C9. I can do all the things that are required of me not only in the exercise,

but if required, even in the exercise of my duties as a member of the Canadian Armed Forces. I am very proud of that.

I would point out there are a number of leading organizations that are in favour of this, such as the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, the Canadian Labour Congress, the women's shelters in Canada, the National Association of Women and the Law, the Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada, and the PolySeSouvient. People must remember the 14 women who were killed in 1989. As well, the Canadian Coalition for Gun Control, which represents over 200 groups, and the First Nations Chiefs of Police Association are in favour of this legislation. It is an important consideration that there are many great groups that are actually in favour of this legislation.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's service in the Canadian Armed Forces. A number of veterans who are lawful users of firearms are probably wondering why the member does not have more of a background to answer the question from my colleague for Calgary Nose Hill.

I will make this a very simple question for my friend. He quoted extensively from the little PR stunt that the Minister of Public Safety had on his gangs and guns conference. He quoted the minister. He talked about that summit. Could the member point to one section of this bill that addresses gang-related violence or illegal firearms used by gangs?

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette: Mr. Speaker, it was actually in the last budget, budget 2018. If the member would like to take the time to actually read the budget, he would see that it is in that budget.

The government legislation cannot be taken in isolation. It actually has to be taken as part of a whole-of-government approach. One cannot simply take things by themselves, piece by little piece, cherry-picking how one wishes to make a point. One has to take an overall consideration of all the measures that the government is taking and its actions in order to address the larger issues that affect our society.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one cannot take simple things and then equate it to a larger whole. I think the member has misconstrued the actual provisions in Bill C-42 in the previous Parliament.

The Minister of Public Safety, at the advice of his technical firearms committee, could bring a recommendation to the Governor in Council, the cabinet, and bring to his colleagues a rationale for change to the status of a particular firearm to overrule the RCMP.

The RCMP do a great job. However, that legislation did not take the power away from the RCMP. It just allowed a check. Does the member not believe in the importance of having oversight over the bureaucracies that we have in this country, that politicians should be accountable, and they should be able to act on technical advice?

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette: Mr. Speaker, I will try and make it short. At the end of the day, we do need experts. It is about science and it is about using data. For instance, in Winnipeg we actually did a long census looking at the homelessness issue, not only 18 months ago but just last month. We released that data. It is to allow us to make sure that we have the data and the statistics necessary to put in place good government programs.

In this case, if the experts have decided that these should be prohibited arms, we should rely on that expert testimony, and we should not, within reason, question it too much.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier this year the Prime Minister had a bit of an incident when he went to India. That trip did not go so well. It was supposed to be a visit where a bunch of photo ops would take place that ostensibly would have gained him votes in certain communities in Canada. He had very expensive costumes provided to him and very expensive photographers. He brought his own Indian chef to India. All of these things were supposed to do wonderful things for the Prime Minister's reputation, but it did not go so well. It was probably one of the worst foreign trips in Canadian history. It was ostensibly a disaster.

It was one of those moments when everything crystallized. All of the Prime Minister's gaffes, spending scandals, errors, everything that Canadians were willing to forgive just kind of crystallized in a moment. Canadians knew he was not in it for them, but in it for himself. It was that moment.

I can imagine Gerald Butts sitting around asking how to change the channel. The Liberals looked south of our border for something concerning. They looked toward gun violence in the United States and decided to capitalize on that. They tabled a gun bill in Canada in an effort to make the situation in the United States the same as it is in Canada in an effort to change the channel politically. That is disgusting. Really.

When we think about the dialogue that is happening in the U.S. around public safety and for Justin Trudeau, the so-called defender of rights—

• (2235)

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member knows that we do not use the names of individual members here, but rather their titles.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, for the Prime Minister to use what was happening in the United States to try and change the channel on his debacle in India was something that I think will go down in history as a very misguided attempt to do so. He tabled the bill in the House, capitalizing on gun violence in a country that does not have the same laws as us, which is disgusting. Canada is not the United States. For colleagues who are watching around the world, my colleagues opposite are applauding that comment.

However, I am a law-abiding firearms owner, and from the moment I decided to become a law-abiding firearms owner to the moment that I actually became one, it took me a year. In Canada, it is not like buying a latte: here is a latte and so I am a latte owner. The same decision tree does not exist to be a firearms owner in Canada. We have very rigorous screening processes and education processes. For those who are watching at home, my colleagues across the aisle are laughing and mocking me. Why? It is because they have not gone through this process. Many of them do not understand the fact that a lot of agricultural communities rely on firearms as a tool of their trade and there are actually hundreds of thousands of Canadians who participate in sport shooting, as I do, and I am a proud sport shooter. I am also proud to abide by the laws of this country.

I have been a member of cabinet. I am a member of the Privy Council. I have gone through extreme vetting to become part of that. I accept my responsibility to become educated on firearms and to

accept a vetting process that is associated with the right to own a firearm in Canada. In fact, my name is run through databases every day to see if I have committed a crime, because I am a firearms owner. Again, my colleagues are mocking me for this. The Liberal Party is mocking me as I give this speech.

The Liberals do not understand how critical it is to be pragmatic on these issues in Canada. They do not understand the vetting that I go through. I think the vetting for me to be a cabinet minister and to have access to state secrets is actually less rigorous than it is for me to own a restricted firearm in Canada every day.

In October 2014, as many of my colleagues were here, we were subjected to a very serious incident in the House of Commons. We were shot at by a terrorist, and I had people say to me, "Well, maybe if we only had more stringent gun laws in Canada that this wouldn't have happened". Therefore, I took it upon myself to understand what it actually took to own a firearm in Canada. The journey I went through to educate myself on this made me realize that Canada has a very strict set of laws that firearms owners need to adhere to.

Now, for the Prime Minister to table this legislation and try to deflect from his India trip when the U.S. was going through a very serious conversation around firearms legislation in a completely different context than Canada is disgusting. Why? It is because we actually have gang-related violence in Canada. Anybody who lives in Toronto wants to have a conversation about how we protect our citizens from the effects of gang violence and illegal firearms ownership.

The bill would do nothing to protect people from firearms that have been obtained illegally. It would do nothing to prevent gang violence. Further, the government has tabled proposed legislation to water down the penalties associated with gang violence and with terrorism. I stood up in the House of Commons today and asked the government to prosecute ISIS terrorists who are in Canada who are walking free, and who have confessed to their crimes on public podcasts. What is the government's response to any sort of crime in this country? It is to prosecute people who abide by the laws, under very strong penalties, very strong educational requirements, and we are not in the United States of America, for political gain, to change the channel, and that is wrong.

• (2240)

Every person in the House should be focused on protecting Canadians from crime and the bill does nothing. If anything, it vilifies people who have obtained their firearms lawfully and are focused on safety, who want to educate and teach people about the respect that owning a firearm carries.

Why can we not be focused on talking about how we actually prevent gang violence, prevent people from illegally obtaining firearms, instead of doing something that does none of that? All this does is prosecute farmers. It prosecutes someone like me. When I get off the plane in Calgary after a long week, I do not mind firing off a set of ammo at the range. It makes me focus and makes me respect the weapon I am holding.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Ms. Michelle Rempel: My colleagues opposite just heckled me with "Annie Oakley". That shows how they do not understand the community, the sport, or the respect for firearms. I tabled a petition in the House asking for the members of the committee that is supposed to inform the government, the subject matter experts on this, to at least have the licence that I have, that I understand how to use, but they refused. Why? Because this is all about ideology, not about keeping Canadians safe. The government does not give two hoots about keeping Canadians safe. The Liberals care about the politics of the Prime Minister's ego because that is what is keeping them in office. That is what Canadians rejected in Chicoutimi tonight, by the way. They care about changing the channel, but regardless of political stripe, Canadians are standing up and saying this makes no sense. If we want to keep Canadians safe from firearms, then deal with the people who are illegally bringing it in and using it illegally in gang violence.

The RCMP should have an oversight with regard to firearms reclassification. People who are on the committee advising the government on this should understand the basics of requiring a licence. If the government really cares about keeping Canadians safe, it should not be watering down sentences for major crimes in the omnibus justice bill, Bill C-75. The bill does nothing to protect Canadians. All it does is vilify people who play by the rules. On this side of the aisle, we stand up for law-abiding Canadians and we will keep Canadians safe.

• (2245)

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we talked about what priorities the government should be looking at. What does the member suggest the government could look at? Could she also give us a brief update on the election results tonight?

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, across the country people are rejecting virtue signalling, do-nothing politics that cost Canadians a lot and do nothing for them. That happened in Quebec tonight and as an Alberta MP, I am so incredibly proud of the results in Chicoutimi. Between this and the election results in Ontario, people are rejecting policies that cost Canadians so much and do nothing for them and that is what the bill does.

All the bill does is create bureaucracy and inefficiency and vilify people who play by the rules. Canadians have had enough of that. They have had enough of the Prime Minister's socks, his India trip, and his spending scandals. They have had enough of \$14-billion deficits. They have had enough of \$8-million rinks out front. They have had enough. I have had enough.

Across this country, people are raising their voices and saying it is time for change. It is time for better policy. It is time for hope. It is time for good governance and congratulations to Chicoutimi for being the first on the vanguard of making that happen.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today, the people of Chicoutimi did indeed get a chance to say out loud what all Canadians have been thinking for months. Canadians feel they are being ignored by a government whose priorities do not match theirs.

Tonight, we are gathered here to debate a bill on, among other things, the issue of firearms. Chicoutimi is home to thousands of law-abiding Canadians, including moms and dads, who consider guns to be part of their lives. They do not own guns for nefarious reasons. On the contrary, they own them because they are carrying on the tradition of their parents, their grandparents, and their great-grandparents. That is true in Chicoutimi, Hay River, Flin Flon, and Richmond. It is true from coast to coast to coast.

Based on her personal experience, could the member tell us how all Canadians, from coast to coast to coast, are united on this issue, which comes down to a matter of respecting all Canadians?

[English]

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, Canada is a geographically diverse country. I know so many people living in agricultural communities who understand that a firearm is part of the agricultural life. I know many people in first nations communities who understand that this is part of their traditional lifestyle. I know many Olympic sports shooters who understand that when one owns a firearm there are responsibilities associated with that.

They are proud to abide by the laws we have set in Canada. They are tired of being vilified by left-wing social justice warriors who believe that the only way to reduce gang violence and illegal gun use in our country is by vilifying them. We are saying, enough is enough. They should get educated and understand that if we want to see change in this country it cannot come by making the ATT a paper or attaching it to the licence, or saying, "Oh my goodness, maybe I should phone about this." No, the government should put forward stronger penalties for gang violence and call it out for what it is.

There is nothing in the bill that would make it more difficult for people to obtain firearms illegally. In fact, it vilifies soldiers who have PTSD and who just want to have pride in their firearms usage. It is probably going to drive people who have mental health issues away from seeking treatment. We are not talking about the respect that our soldiers who go on to have careers in training on firearms or sports shooting have for their weapons after serving our country. This bill was designed to be a weapon for the Prime Minister's ego, after his disastrous India trip and after he tried to take political credit for what was happening in the United States. That is disgusting.

He should be standing up against gang violence in Surrey. He should be standing up against gang violence in Toronto. He should be putting forward stronger penalties for this. He has done nothing except lower penalties for this. That is what our party will continue to stand against, and I will continue to stand against.

• (2250)

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member for Calgary Nose Hill gave a great presentation. It was really inspiring and hopefully our colleagues across the aisle were paying attention. I know they were awestruck because they did not ask any questions. She must have really had their attention. She must have done such a good job answering our questions that the Liberals did not ask her one question during the question and answer period.

We are talking about Bill C-71. What a loss of opportunity. The day is winding down and Liberal members want to get out of here as soon as possible. Let us just think of the things that should be going on in this chamber right now. Let us think of all the priorities of Canadians that are not a priority of the Liberal government. Bill C-71 deals with gun violence, but what would it do for gang violence? It would do nothing for gang violence, nothing for illegal ownership. Those guys just go through the revolving door and there is zero impact. Bill C-71 will not do that. We have established that quite clearly.

What about rural crime? Rural crime is a huge issue in Saskatchewan, Alberta, and rural Ontario. The farmers who have guns for shooting ducks or maybe the odd bear that may run into their yards, or for skeet shooting, are the ones now targeted. They are being told they are doing something wrong, so this legislation is for them. What about the guy who drove into someone's yard and stole a quad, or the guy who drove into someone's yard and shot at a family, or the guy who drove into someone's yard and stole things out of a shed for the fourth or fifth time? What is being done to catch those people and make sure they stay in jail? What is being done to take that revolving door away? How are judges being instructed to give sentences that actually stick? That is what the farmers would say. If we were talking about that, they would be watching us on TV and applauding all of us. However, what are we talking about? We are talking about law-abiding citizens going through more processes, more bureaucrats being hired, and a backdoor long-gun registry for people who already follow the law. It is so disappointing.

If the Liberals had their priorities right, what would we be talking about in this chamber tonight? Jobs and the economy should be the top topics. We are seeing investment flee this country left, right, and centre, and the Liberals seem to ignore it. They say it will be fine; it will come back some day. It will. In 2019, when there is a Conservative government, it will start coming back, but until the Liberals change their ways, it will not. It keeps bleeding out. The numbers are very real. The impact on jobs, on our kids, and on the ability of our kids to find jobs is very real.

We could be talking about NAFTA. The NAFTA negotiations are ongoing. We could be discussing the future of that and the path forward. We could talk about the softwood lumber agreement and the forestry workers. There is still nothing in place for them. We could talk about the TPP. That would be a great thing to talk about, something the Conservatives and the Liberals actually agree on. We want to get this done and get it through the House as quickly as

possible. Why has that not been put forward so we could do that this week, so that the farmers, the manufacturers, the people who require export markets could take advantage of those markets in this time of turmoil? Why are we not talking about that? No, we are telling those same farmers that we are talking about Bill C-71 and making them criminals, making their lives even more difficult if they own a .22 or a shotgun. It does not make sense to the average Canadian.

There are lots of things that people are concerned about moving forward. In the auto sector, there are tariffs coming. Where is the discussion on that? Again, the Liberals have nothing to say. They have no game plan, and yet they will talk about Bill C-71 and all sorts of things. They will keep the House going for as many days as it takes to pass legislation on pot, and yet when it comes to something like the TPP, where are they? They say, "Let's go home." It is unreal. It is absolutely amazing.

Where are their priorities? Where are their heads with regard to what Canadians really want? The by-election proved that. Their priorities are so mixed up and delusional, somewhere out there in left field, that they have lost the basis of reality. The reality is that if there are no jobs, we cannot take care of the environment, because the environment and the economy go hand in hand. Let me repeat that: The environment and the economy go hand in hand. We have to take care of the economy in order to take care of the environment, and they have ignored the economy. That is the reality.

• (2255)

In five minutes, I have touched on a few things that the Liberals could take care of that would make our country a better place to live. That is just in five minutes.

The Liberals have had two years, and they have done nothing. How many bureaucrats have been hired in the last two years? The government has spent a lot of money, but on what? I do not have a new bridge in Prince Albert. I do not have a new hospital. I still have sewer and water issues on all the reserves.

However, the Liberals are in control. They have their finger on the pulse. They know what they are doing. Canadians are starting to realize very quickly that they do not. I know my colleague from Calgary Nose Hill talked about the trip to India. I think it was the BBC article that made Canadians start to look and say, "Holy cow, what did we do?" Canada is back. What does that mean? What is the Liberal interpretation of "Canada is back"? If that is what it is, please, somebody do something.

I go back to my riding to talk about a variety of things. I think back to the last long-gun registry. My riding was actually a Liberal riding, and then came the long-gun registry. It will never go Liberal again.

Do members know what happened? Do members know why that changed? It was because there were a lot of people who looked at that riding and said that the Liberals at the time, Paul Martin and Ralph Goodale, were balancing the budget. People thought they could maybe buy into that—

The Speaker: Order. I have to remind the hon. member not to use names—

Mr. Randy Hoback: Sorry, I apologize to my colleagues.

There was balancing budgets and getting back to balancing books, things that Canadians could buy into. Then a Liberal member came to the riding and said, "You will do this. You will register your long guns. By the way, if you don't, you're a criminal, and I don't care how old you are. If you're 80 years old and you didn't register, you're a criminal."

They turfed him. Canadians turfed a lot of Liberals. If you want to do that, then watch yourselves get turfed again. The reality is such—

The Speaker: I have to ask the hon. member to direct his comments to the Chair.

Mr. Randy Hoback: At least for one more year.

Mr. Speaker, let us get back to the bill at hand, Bill C-71. We still have gangs in Toronto, and they are going to do what they want to do, when they want to do it. They are going to ignore this legislation.

I am sure they are going to go into a gun shop, buy a gun, and say, "Oh, by the way, I'm going to fill out these forms and wait my time to get that. I will take the PAL course and do all that. You bet." It is going to do a lot for real crime. It is going to be wonderful to see these guys sitting there thinking, "I'm going to attack that yard, but I better go get my gun registered before I do it." That is not going to happen. Let us get back to priorities.

If the Liberal government was going to bring in legislation like that, as I said, Canadians will be watching us to the nth degree.

Anyway, I think I will close there. I think I have said enough. I look forward to questions.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is refreshing to hear passion from a member of Parliament when he speaks. I appreciate the member.

He talked about the political history of his riding of Prince Albert, and after a dark Liberal period, there emerged a great Conservative leader from Prince Albert, much like that previous Conservative from Prince Albert, John Diefenbaker. He is doing Diefenbaker proud, because Diefenbaker had the Bill of Rights, and it is about rights and responsibilities, as my friend from Lévis said when we had the common-sense firearms legislation, where we brought common sense and fairness back.

The approach has been different under the Liberals. They talk about guns and gangs, and they have a summit, but there is zero in the legislation on gang crime. Could the member reflect for a moment on how this, much like Allan Rock a generation ago, is another attempt to divide Canadians, and will do nothing for public safety.

• (2300)

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, John Diefenbaker, the former prime minister, was a leader in so many ways: appointed the first female cabinet minister, recognized the importance of the north, and allowed aboriginals to vote. These are Conservative initiatives. No matter what people say, they cannot rewrite that history. Those are Conservative initiatives and they are things of which to be proud. I am sure if "Dief" were here right now, he would tell people—

An hon. member: Vote Andrew Scheer.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Of course, vote Andrew Scheer.

The Speaker: Order, please. I have to remind the member not to use the names of members of the House.

The hon. member for London North Centre.

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the hon. member talk about his understanding of the bill. I have before me a quote from a gun vendor, an actual business person who has talked about the bill and his understanding of it. How does the hon. member feel about this interpretation? This gun vendor said:

[T]here's not been a real big change on the actual aspect of logging the customer's information and keeping on record what they've purchased. We already do it with ammunition, now they're just asking us to do it with guns. By doing it with guns we're going to give the police and the community the tool to begin to track where guns are purchased, how they're being trafficked and how they're being used, so that's not a bad thing.

If Bill C-71 is okay for gun vendors, if it passes their test, what is wrong with it? Why is the hon. member opposed to what law-abiding gun vendors have to say about the bill?

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, the member found one gun vendor who was able to give him a quote that he could use in the House of Commons. However, gun vendors have become a shopping list for gangs. They break into that store and they have a shopping list of all the guns in all the areas and of who has what. Is that what we really want? I do not think so. That is just what they have delivered to the gangs. It is just a shopping list of where to get the guns they want.

Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague and I have talked over the years. I used to be a registrar before I became a member of Parliament, and I was a registrar for the chiropractor profession. Whenever we put in legislation, etc., the criminals had gotten around it before it even went before the Queen's printer. I wonder if the member could comment on how criminals do not follow the rules.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, there is no question that the member from Estevan really knows his stuff. Again, here is an example of a member taking his life experience, bringing it to the chamber, and talking about things that are important to the people in his riding. Some members on the government side could learn a lot from him.

The member is right: Criminals will always find a way to do what they want to do, so it does not matter—

The Speaker: Resuming debate, the hon. member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound.

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand here tonight and talk about Bill C-71. This is an important bill for my riding. I have spoken to this a number of times.

Before I get into the bill's history, I want to talk for a minute about so many of my good colleagues around here, especially my colleagues from Quebec. We added to their numbers tonight up in Chicoutimi—Le Fjord. I am looking forward to another Conservative member coming here. I used to buy cattle in the Chicoutimi area. I also used to hunt and fish up in that area. There is no doubt in my mind that Bill C-71 is one of the reasons that Mr. Martel, apparently one of the most famous hockey coaches in Quebec, was elected tonight with a huge majority.

The reason I mention that is that Canadians everywhere, whether they are in Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, in Yukon, or in Chicoutimi, Quebec, are ordinary Canadians who hate to be told they are criminals just because they like to hunt or farm and they have a rifle.

I was a farmer in my other life. Most farmers in this country, whether they hunt or not, have a firearm. They use their firearm to go after that rabid fox that gets in with the livestock, or a coyote or bear that is trying to take down a newborn calf, or as the member for Prince Albert mentioned, intruders who come on the property with the intention to steal stuff. It is commonplace in rural Canada for people to have a firearm.

Earlier, the member for Oakville North—Burlington commented that firearms owners are law abiding until they are not. What in the heck does that mean? I just shake my head at that. I have a lot of respect for that member who sits on the public safety committee but if that is not aiming a dart at a large law-abiding group of people in this country then I do not know what is. I am ticked off by her comment. I am offended by it and I am sure a lot of people across this country are offended by it as well.

Turning to some of the history as to why Bill C-71 came out, the Liberal government said it was going to do something about gang violence and the illegal firearms trade. What did it do? It did not do one thing. I have talked privately to a number of members across the way who admitted there is nothing in this legislation. This is a signal to a group of people who are absolutely against firearms for various reasons, or they are against hunting or whatever, and the ultimate goal is to get rid of firearms everywhere. It does not recognize the fact that lots of people know how to handle them.

I have had a gun in my hand since I was eight or nine years old. I was taught by my father how to handle it safely. My boys got their licence when they were 12 years old, which is what the legal hunting age was. I taught them how to handle a firearm, the same as I taught them how to ride a bike or do whatever. Respect is taught along with that. It is not just about learning how to operate a firearm. It is the same when it comes to running farm equipment. The member for Malpeque, who sits on the opposite side of the aisle, grew up on a farm. He would have taught his kids the same way. Whether it is a piece of farm equipment, a firearm, or whatever else, we have to teach the proper way to handle it and to treat it with respect and then everything will be good.

I sat in on a public safety committee meeting a few weeks ago. Some of the testimony that I heard that day would blow one's mind, no pun intended.

• (2305)

What came out of Bill C-71 was that the government fudged the numbers. The crime rate with firearms has been dropping since the mid-1960s, which is common knowledge. However, they really dropped in 2013. What did the government do? It used that as the base number, knowing that no way would we get the same drastic drop in firearms crime in 2014, and it went up a bit. All of a sudden, my God, the sky was falling, and everybody was shooting everybody everywhere, but that was not the case. On fudging numbers, two witnesses both said something long the same lines.

The reason I mention that is because of what we got from the member for Kenora. I have hunted and fished in his riding. I have a lot of friends up there. I am sure they will be happy after his comment tonight. He said that among firearms owners, there was a lot of mental health issues. There sure as heck is not in my family, friends, and the people who I know who hunt and handle firearms. That was a pretty blanket statement. I do not know if he meant to say it, but when I asked in a question, he pretty well repeated it, so I kind of think he meant it. That kind of thing is not helpful. It is not correct. Sure there are examples, but the one thing worth pointing out in this is when he talked about some of this mental health, he started off by talking about the U.S.

The U.S. has a way worse record and a way worse problem with firearms than we do in Canada. Why? Because we have the toughest laws in the world. We have had the toughest handgun laws in the world since the 1930s, and we are well ahead with long guns, etc.

We all know the history of 1995. In fact, one of the things that motivated me to get into federal politics was the long gun registry. I can still hear my dad. At 86, he is still hunting. He was made to feel like a criminal. My father-in-law was felt the same way. God bless his soul, he has passed away. However, he was going to bury his guns rather than register them, and he did not want to break the law. That just shows us that when we attack law-abiding firearms owners, they get upset, they want to fight back, and they shove back.

In this most recent attack, the numbers were fudged and members tried to pretend that we had the same crime problem or gun problem as the people in the United States. When members start comparing us with the U.S., they are going down a road they should never go down. It is like apples and oranges. We just cannot do it. The U.S. has problems because it does not have the same kind of laws as we have up here.

I talked about the crime rates dropping and the Canadian firearms advisory committee. My good friend from Calgary spoke a few minutes ago. About a year ago, I had a long conversation with her about this. She had a bit of a personal issue with firearms. She finally realized that she did not understand it and did not know what it was. She said she had a lot of people who hunted in her riding. What did she do? Probably the smartest thing any politician could do. She went out and got a PAL. Everybody was telling her that it was so easy to get a gun, a licence, and do all of that. She went out and did it all, and it took her over a year. There is nothing wrong with that. We are not complaining, but it just goes to show that all kinds of rules are in place. If more members went out and did what the member from Calgary did, we would be a lot better off.

Every member who sits on the Canadian firearms advisory committee should have gone out and got a PAL, like the member from Calgary did, so they would know how the system worked instead of bringing their bias to the committee.

• (2310)

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was at a wedding last night in my riding. It was a very beautiful night. One of the saddest moments was when a mother walked in. A month ago as her son was taking out the garbage at 11 p.m. in downtown Toronto he was shot in retaliation for a shooting that took place in my colleague's riding in Eglinton—Lawrence a few weeks before. In that case, an innocent bystander was killed.

The weapon used in that shooting belonged to someone who lived in the riding that I represent, the same neighbourhood where this young man was shot. That person owned 11 handguns legally and he ferried them around the city to different gang members to pay for his university education. This situation is something which I would like the opposite side to start to contemplate and provide some reflection for me on it. It is a serious situation in the city that I represent and real kids are losing their lives.

The mother is a nurse at St. Michael's Hospital. She found out that her kid had been shot because he was wheeled into her emergency room while she was taking care of other people's children. This is a serious situation in Toronto. I appreciate the long guns that the member opposite just talked about, the tools that are used to protect cabs and that are used to get rid of foxes that are rabid and are used to protect tree planters like my sister was. She has a long gun and she worked in the interior of B.C. for many years. I get that they are tools.

You register your tractor. You register your car. You register your boat. You register the other tools of your hobbies and businesses. I do not understand why guns make you so upset—

• (2315)

The Speaker: Order. I have to ask the member to direct his comments to the Chair.

"You" is speaking of the Speaker.

Mr. Adam Vaughan: Mr. Speaker, what is the problem with registering the guns? Second, you say there is not enough in the bill to deal with—

The Speaker: I think we had better go to the hon. member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, please.

Mr. Larry Miller: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague's question is a good one. My condolences go out to the family. That is the kind of stuff that we all hate to hear about, it does not matter where it is.

Respectfully, the answer to his question is in part of the comment that he made. The 11 handguns, if I heard him right, were basically sold to gang members. If that is not the case, I would like to talk to him in private because that was my understanding from listening, that they ended up in the hands of the gangs.

Young lives were lost and I feel very bad for the mother, but I do not know what we have to do to get the hon. member and others to understand that the bill does nothing to address gang crimes and illegal firearm sales. It only puts another burden on the people who already register and are law-abiding firearms owners.

Mr. Adam Vaughan: Mr. Speaker, it is an honest conversation because I think the bill does two things. It places much more stringent background checks on individuals so that when someone is acting in a way that is inappropriate, there is a longer and deeper investigation as to why that person may be inappropriately holding guns or a licence.

Second, restrictions on moving guns around cities makes cities safer. Those are two things that will make the communities that I represent safer.

Could the other side explain why registering all those other tools is acceptable, but guns somehow should be different?

Mr. Larry Miller: Mr. Speaker, I guess I misunderstood his first response. I thought he was going to stand and clarify it and he did not. He wants to target something that is already happening to law-abiding firearms owners. Tomorrow or the next day, I hope the member contacts me because as a law-abiding firearms owner and a politician, a legislator like he is, I would like to better understand the situation and at that point maybe we could have a good dialogue.

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it has been a very interesting evening and an interesting debate, with a lot of information and emotion. I get to follow the last three, and they are tough to follow. Many of the things I might say will be related to things that have already been said, such as gang violence, illegal guns, illegal handguns, the penalties for those people who use those illegal weapons, and the consequences that follow.

I have heard from a lot of my constituents on this. There are a lot of unhappy constituents. I just heard a member across the aisle say that it is a registry, but I heard several members across the floor tonight saying it is not a registry. It was really nice to hear a member stand up and say it is a registry, but all the previous ones stood up and said it is not a registry. This bill targets law-abiding firearms owners in my riding. It does not actually prevent the crimes. They use firearms in legitimate and lawful ways. They use them to hunt, to work, and for sport shooting. Firearms are a big part of their rural life.

I remember a few years ago when I was the principal of a high school, there were issues about guns and gun violence with youth. I happened to be in a regional meeting of principals talking about guns and other issues, and I said there would be guns in vehicles in the parking lot of my school. There were other principals from urban areas who were astounded that I would admit there were guns in vehicles in my parking lot. I said, "You bet there are." Those are farm trucks. Those are ranching vehicles. Those guns are tools. Those students know how to use those tools. They are trained how to use them, and they are there as a tool in their vehicle. They drive the vehicle to school and they drive it home. They may use that gun as a tool on the way to school or on the way home. It is part of rural life. They are responsible for those firearms. They do not like being targeted every time a Liberal government says that we need to have a registry or more gun control.

The opposition to this bill is not just in my riding. It is across Canada. E-petition 1608 which calls on the government to scrap this law had over 80,000 signatures the last time I checked. That is the second largest e-petition in history. I do not know why that number does not give the government pause. Regardless, I am happy to have the opportunity to convey some of my constituents' concerns about the bill.

The largest source of disappointment is it has nothing to do with gang violence, illegal handguns, and crime in rural areas. My constituents say they hear about the gang violence, the shootings in cities, and they experience rural crime, but where in the legislation does it do anything about that, other than make them do more red tape as legal gun owners?

There are a lot of obvious points about the bill, but criminals are generally not using legal firearms. What is driving gun violence is gangs and illegal handguns. The illegal use of handguns will not be impacted by this legislation. Only those who already follow the law will. Criminals do not register illegal weapons nor do those who have the number filed off those weapons.

Let me move to some obvious points suggesting this legislation is poorly designed. Given that we are at report stage of the legislation, it is worth looking at some of the testimony my colleagues heard in committee. They heard from Solomon Friedman, a criminal defence

lawyer in Ottawa and expert in firearms. He had some interesting testimony. We all heard the Minister of Public Safety suggest the legislation is intended to combat increasing gun violence from 2013. Mr. Friedman noted, as some of my colleagues have already said, that the year 2013 as a starting point for the reported trend was not chosen at random. As we know, 2013 was a statistical aberration in terms of violent crime and homicide in Canada. The year 2013 saw the lowest rate of criminal homicide in Canada in 50 years. If we start at a point that was the lowest, the only place it probably will go is slightly up. It looks like the Liberal government has used statistics to justify targeting law-abiding firearm owners. This is a disappointing choice.

• (2320)

My colleagues at the public safety and national security committee also heard from Mr. Gary Mauser. He noted that 121 of the 141 firearms-related homicides that the minister cited were directly related to gangs in cities. Where in the legislation does it deal with gangs that are working with illegal handguns? It is not there.

We know what the real issues are out there. We agree that the safety of Canadians should be our priority. However, the government seems intent on distorting the evidence to suit its particular narrative. I think many of my colleagues have pointed out why it is doing this. The Liberals are pretending the legislation will do something to combat crime, but all it does is place more regulations on law-abiding firearms owners.

At the same time, the government has introduced Bill C-75, which makes all kinds of serious crimes punishable with a mere fine. That for rural crime is a real challenge. We have many people in western Canada, in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, where rural crime rates have increased in the last two or three years. People are using guns and violence, robbing properties, and are being slapped with fines. They will be right back on those properties. It should be the reverse. If people are using guns in crimes, there should be more severe penalties. This is not how we stop gun use in crimes by letting people off with fines.

The witness testimony I noted undermines a lot of rationale for this legislation. It supports what I have heard from so many law-abiding constituents, who use their firearms for sport, work, or hunting. They are not happy that the word "gangs" never appears in this bill. "Illegal handguns" does not appear there. However, they are even more unhappy to see the word "registrar" in the legislation. In fact, it looks like the words "registrar" or "reference number" are used 28 times. It is a registry. As the last member from across the aisle admitted, it is a registry.

It seems pretty clear that Bill C-71 would make it mandatory to register firearms and provide reference numbers. That information would be logged by a business and then passed onto the government. The government has been insistent that this is not a new gun registry.

Law-abiding gun owners will follow the law. They will do this because they are law-abiding gun owners. They will go through more red tape because they are law-abiding Canadian citizens. That is all it is doing is providing more red tape for those people.

I was happy at first to see that the Liberals supported one of our amendments, the one that stated "For greater certainty, nothing in this act shall be construed so as to permit or require the registration of non-restricted firearms." I expected they would back up their support for this amendment by actually taking action. I assumed they would then support changes that removed the elements of the legislation that essentially created a new registry. However, they did not do such thing.

It makes sense that the government does not want to remind Canadians of the wasteful \$2 billion gun registry we dealt with before, but we do not know the cost of what they will do with this one. There will be a lot of bureaucracy, but there is no cost assigned to this. It is going to cost money, possibly a lot.

As I said, we want concrete measures that keep Canadians safe. I know the members opposite do not have bad intentions in supporting this legislation. However, they should understand that the bill would do nothing to fight the criminal elements that are behind gun violence. They should be focused on that. Instead they try to criminalize law-abiding citizens. I know there are members who are from rural communities and have misgivings about this legislation. Again, does this stop gun violence? Does this stop the illegal use of handguns? We need handguns to be out of the hands of criminals.

• (2325)

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would invite the member to look at the blues of the proceedings of the committee on public safety in which two things happened.

The MP for Red Deer—Lacombe, who spoke earlier tonight, is a member of the committee. He said outright at committee, "everybody at this table agrees that this", Bill C-71, "is not a registry." Therefore, it is on record that Bill C-71 does not constitute a registry in any way, shape, or form. In fact, the Conservatives, as we have heard tonight, tabled an amendment to that same effect. Why are they playing these sorts of games when their own members have put on the record the fact that Bill C-71 does not constitute a registry in any shape or form.

What does the hon. member have to say to that?

• (2330)

Mr. Martin Shields: Mr. Speaker, if I heard right, the member's colleague, just down the bench, just a few minutes ago, called it a registry. He called it a long-gun registry. Check the record. His Liberal colleague, sitting straight across from me, called it a registry.

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have noticed over the last few hours that the questions seem to be coming from our side of the House, and there has been a kind of hush over the Liberal side of the House. I wonder if it is not a

reflection on the base that they formerly held in Chicoutimi that went rather silent, seeing a great Conservative win there, adding to our numbers here in the very near future.

I have a question for the member for Bow River. This bill does not seem to address anything dealing with gun crime, gun violence, or gang violence. It does not seem to address any of that. Have we missed something in the bill, or have the Liberals missed something in this bill?

Mr. Martin Shields: Mr. Speaker, absolutely, when I heard the member from Toronto speaking earlier about the tragedy in his riding, in a neighbouring riding, and the parents who had to deal with this. Absolutely, the Liberals have missed this piece. Illegal handguns are coming into this country, and we need to find the mechanisms by which to stop and eliminate illegal handguns. It is not in the bill.

The 121 out of 141 cases in this country were with illegal handguns. That is the problem. It is not addressed in this legislation.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to touch on something I know my colleague did not have a chance to speak about in his intervention.

We had a rural crime task force in Alberta. Many of us had open houses throughout the province. One of the things that came out, loud and clear, was the frustration from our constituents that Bill C-71, proposed to deal with gun violence, gang violence, and illegal firearms, but those things were not in this bill.

We hear the frustration from our constituents in Alberta, where there is such an increase in rural crime. I know many of my colleagues from both sides of the floor are dealing with this issue. Could the member comment a little on how frustrated our rural constituents are throughout the country that this bill had an opportunity to address one of the largest issues that rural Canadians are facing, and it failed to do so?

Mr. Martin Shields: Mr. Speaker, if members want to see emotion in a room, they should have been in those town halls. People are scared. They are frightened. They are frightened for their lives. They are frightened because their property is being stolen constantly. Those people are using illegal weapons.

Once they are caught, it is just a revolving door, and they are back out on bail, immediately. There is not enough of a penalty for people using illegal firearms.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. Resuming debate. Order.

The hon. member for Provencher.

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to rise in the House today and to share my comments about Bill C-71.

The Speaker: Order. I would ask the hon. member for Foothills, the member for Laurentides—Labelle, and the member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame to listen to the speeches and not be interrupting when someone else has the floor.

The hon. member for Provencher.

Mr. Ted Falk: Mr. Speaker, Bill C-71 was introduced in March of this year. In his speech arguing in favour of the bill, the Minister of Public Safety called it "important legislation that prioritizes public safety and effective police work, while treating law-abiding firearms owners and businesses fairly and reasonably". He went on to add that this bill upheld the Liberal Party's commitment not to reinstate a federal long-gun registry.

I take issue with both of those claims. What I have seen with the Liberal government's Bill C-71 is quite the opposite. Bill C-71 does not treat law-abiding firearms owners fairly, and it is abundantly clear that the Liberals are moving forward with what is, in effect, even if not in name, a new gun registry.

Let us begin with the claim that law-abiding firearms owners are treated fairly by the Liberal government. I think all Canadians believe in ensuring we treat firearms owners responsibly. We understand that, in the interests of public safety, there are sensible measures that can be taken. I think all of us in this place agree on that point. The trouble with Bill C-71 is that it is not offering any sensible measures to combat gang violence, gun violence, or escalating crime rates in our rural communities.

My Conservative colleagues and I recognize that the safety of Canadians must be the number one priority of any government, and we will support common-sense legislation related to firearms that will help keep Canadians safe, but here is the problem: Bill C-71 does not do that. It has no measures to combat the increasing rates of gun violence, domestic violence, gang violence, or to address the increasing rates of rural crime either in my riding of Provencher or across the country.

All this bill does is add greater costs and regulatory burdens to law-abiding firearms owners. In fact, the bill uses the words "registrar" or "reference number" 28 times. Do members know how many times the words "gang" or "criminal organization" appear? Zero. If Bill C-71 is not targeting criminals, who exactly is going to be impacted by this legislation? How are Canadians going to be better off for it? The answer to that first question is, unsurprisingly, law-abiding firearms owners. This bill makes the same mistake the Liberals always make on this issue. It is targeting law-abiding firearms owners instead of criminals. It is high time the Liberals stopped treating lawful gun owners like criminals.

This legislation offers plenty more red tape for those who follow the law. It will certainly create a larger burden for farmers and hunters. However, for those who disregard our laws and commit crimes, there is nothing here to dissuade them from continuing.

As I often say in this place, it is among the primary responsibilities of government to protect its citizens. In fact, our previous Conservative government understood that we could be tough on crime while respecting those who own firearms legally and operate them safely. The criminal element behind firearms violence was always where we focused our attention, yet with Bill C-71, the Liberals have entirely neglected to address the criminals who use guns to commit violence, while treating law-abiding firearms owners like criminals. Why would they do this?

As is the case on most occasions with the Liberals, they are more interested in being seen to be taking action rather than actually taking meaningful action. Let me explain.

It is difficult to address gun and gang violence; we all understand that. It is quite easy, however, to increase red tape and place new restrictions on those who are already following the rules. The Liberals get the benefit of being seen to do something even though the impact of their proposals will do nothing for the serious gun and gang violence Canadians want to see gone from their streets.

I think it is worth highlighting a CBC analysis that was undertaken on this bill, because it speaks to the way the Liberals have tried to justify Bill C-71. The Minister of Public Safety used statistics going back to 2013 to suggest that there had been a dramatic surge in gang shootings since that time. "Gun homicides are up by two-thirds", he warned. However, he chose 2013 specifically because it was an unusual year statistically speaking. The year 2013 "saw Canada's lowest rate of criminal homicides in 50 years, and the lowest rate of fatal shootings ever recorded by Statistics Canada", the CBC analysis from March reads. As the analysis indicates, "What appears to make 2013 attractive as a point of comparison is that any year in the past half century can be made to look alarmingly high by comparing it to 2013."

The Liberals want to be seen as doing something. They were able to manipulate the statistics to create a monster that does not really exist. The Conservatives know that there are still very real issues out there with respect to gun and gang violence, but the Liberals have shown they are not serious about addressing the difficult challenges.

• (2335)

Conservatives will not simply vote in favour of this legislation and play pretend with the Liberals. When the Liberals want to tackle serious crime, Conservatives will be the first to stand with them. In fact, they may consider looking back at our years in government for some pro tips in that regard. Canadians can count on us to fight for concrete actions to keep Canadians safe, focusing our efforts on the criminal element behind this violence. We will not join the Liberals' crusade to make life more difficult for law-abiding Canadians.

Second, I want to discuss the Liberals' claim that Bill C-71 somehow would not reintroduce a gun registry. Now, I know that my Liberal colleagues and the Prime Minister bristle when any assertion is made that this bill is nothing more than a backdoor attempt to bring back the federal long-gun registry. We have heard the Prime Minister say that they are committed to not restoring a long-gun registry and that they are not restoring a long-gun registry; it is that simple. However, somebody needs to explain to the Prime Minister, and to my hon. colleagues, for that matter, that when the federal government is using a federal registrar to keep records on law-abiding firearms owners, that is a gun registry. It is that simple: registrars keep registries. This bill is not about restricted firearms. This is not about illegal guns. The Liberals want to use a federal registrar to keep records on non-restricted firearms and law-abiding firearms owners.

Again, the bill uses the words "registrar" or "reference number" 28 times, and the words "gang" or "criminal organization", zero times. That is why we on this side of the House have called out this proposal for what it is. It is nothing more than a backdoor attempt to bring back the wasteful and ineffective long-gun registry that Conservatives were given a clear mandate to eliminate. I find it interesting that the Prime Minister dismissed this long-gun registry as a failure back in 2012. This was despite his vote in favour of keeping it intact earlier on. Therefore, we should not be surprised that he has changed his mind again. Now he wants a new registry, he just does not want to call it a registry. However, if it walks like a registry and if it talks like a registry—I think members know where I am going—it probably is a registry.

Here is why these kinds of registries do not work. In Canada, 93% of gun crimes that result in death are committed with illegal guns by people who should not have them. The people the government should be targeting with this bill are not legal firearms owners, but those in possession of illegal weapons. Therefore, why in this legislation are the Liberals ignoring gangs, and instead targeting hunters, farmers, and northern Canadians? I serve a rural riding. A lot of good, law-abiding people own firearms, and nobody knows better than hunters and farmers the importance of gun safety and the social responsibility that comes with owning a firearm. That is why it is deeply insulting to have the Liberals consistently impugn not only those people's ability to be responsible citizens, but the kind of moral equivalency we see the Liberals trying to draw between violent gang members, criminals, and then law-abiding firearms owners. The Liberals need to stop focusing their fire on law-abiding farmers, hunters, and northern Canadians, and focus it on felons, on gangs, and on the flow of illegal guns across the borders. However, instead, they continue to target law-abiding citizens, trying to trip them up into an offence by changing the rules.

I do not see any merit in this piece of legislation as it stands. It would not achieve what the Liberals say it will. Instead of targeting gangs and illegal guns, they have stubbornly chosen to keep law-abiding Canadians in their crosshairs. That is why I will be voting against this bill.

That said, I am pleased to highlight that Conservatives have been behind initiatives to address crime in Canada. As I close, I want to highlight the recent efforts of my colleague, the member for Lakeland, and her work to draw attention to rural crime in particular. I was pleased to second her motion, Motion No. 167, which called for an in-depth study of rural crime rates and trends, as well as the current resources available for rural policing and whether they are sufficient. This represents just one of the many efforts by the Conservatives to tackle crime and improve the lives of law-abiding Canadians. I am pleased to say that motion was passed unanimously by this House. With that, I want to close.

• (2340)

Mr. Darrell Samson (Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the conversations and the presentations. However, when I listen to the Conservatives, I wonder how they lost the last election. When they describe all the things they did and how perfect it was, I do not understand how Canadians did not choose them. They did not choose them because they did not do a good job. Let us be honest with that. They did not do a good job.

What parts of this bill do the Conservatives not like? They do not like the background checks. Is there something wrong with the background checks that they do not like? Or, is the part that they do not like the fact that the police would be able to track the guns? What parts do they not like? Those two parts, in my opinion, are extremely important to Canadians. Canadians want to make sure those are accessible to them. Maybe the member can enlighten us and tell us why they do not like those two very important components in this bill.

• (2345)

Mr. Ted Falk: Mr. Speaker, in answer to the member's question as to why Conservatives did not get elected two and a half years ago, I am looking at two and a half hours ago, at what happened in Chicoutimi—Le Fjord. I am thinking that the member across the way needs to get his head out of the sand, or maybe out of the ocean, and start looking at the surf clam scam in his own area of the country. I believe his brother was recently awarded a contract by the federal government for a surf clam licence, a company that did not even have a boat. If he wants to talk about reasons why people do not get elected, we do not have to look very far.

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the public safety minister put forward an investment of \$327 million over five years to look at the gang issue and reduce crime in our country. Under the previous Conservative government, there was only a \$5-million investment over a three-year period. Instead, we have \$327 million to try to get at the heart of the matter in ridings like Winnipeg Centre or Winnipeg North, or in places like Toronto and Vancouver, places that are really affected and impacted by the gang violence that goes on in our country.

I would like to correct the record. The member said that the government was not doing anything. In fact, we are doing a lot of things related to this. We are building on expertise with the provinces and territories and working with practitioners, police agencies, and social groups. These are groups such as Ndinawe and Ma Mawi, groups that work in our communities day in and day out trying to make a difference.

Mr. Ted Falk: Mr. Speaker, that has nothing to do with the bill we are discussing. The hon. member and friend from Winnipeg Centre should look at the legislation carefully to see if this is something that would really address the situation he is talking about, gang violence in his own constituency, which is a significant problem. I realize that and acknowledge that this is a serious issue in his riding.

I will affirm very clearly, from my understanding of this legislation and from what I have read, that this will not help you at all, because it is not law-abiding gun owners you have a problem with. It is gangs, illegal guns, and the drug trade, which will only get worse once Bill C-45 is passed later this week by the Senate. You will have nobody else to thank for that but yourself—

The Speaker: Order. I remind the hon. member for Provencher that when he says "you", that is the Speaker, and I do not think he means that.

We have time for a very short question or comment by the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville.

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I noticed that the members across the way like to say, "Why do you as Conservatives not like this bill"? We like to keep things quiet within our caucuses, but the media got hold of the fact that there are a number of rural ridings on that side of the House that are very upset with this legislation. As well, I believe a constituent in the riding of the member for Lethbridge has put forward a petition that has the largest response in Canada—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Provencher.

Mr. Ted Falk: Mr. Speaker, as I have said before, this bill would do nothing to address the serious issues that the government should be focusing on: gun violence, criminality, and the illegal use of guns. I do not know why the Liberals would pit rural members against urban members in their caucus.

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a number of questions I want to ask tonight to kind of wrap this up.

One of the main questions, as I sat here and listened tonight, is that I fail to understand why the Liberals do not even seem to know the basics of what this proposed law is about. I heard a number of things this evening that are concerning. They do not seem to know

what the past requirements were for background checks. I heard a number of people talking about that. They do not seem to understand that they have been adequate in the past. There has been a good system in place for doing background checks, and it has worked well for Canadians. They do not seem to know that firearms owners have to be registered and be licensed themselves in order to own a firearm. Earlier we heard someone ask why we treat guns differently than some other things. Well, the reality with firearms is that one actually needs to be registered. One has to take the course and get the certification.

I was really concerned a little earlier about why the Liberals approach firearms owners in the way that they do. When the member for Oakville North—Burlington said that all gun owners are law-abiding until they are not, I wondered what she meant by that. There is some sort of attitude of superiority that the Liberals come with in regard to firearms owners, and we have seen this for 25 years. We saw it with Bill C-68 and the fact that they would never back down on that legislation. It cost them dozens of ridings across this country. Several elections later, they have come back with another piece of legislation. I think we are beginning to see both in Ontario, and with the results in Quebec tonight, that the attitude the Liberals have is starting to irritate Canadians. I think we are going to see a response to that, and an even better response from our perspective, in the next federal election.

Also, I do not think the Liberals understand that there is no right to firearms ownership in this country. I think everyone needs to be reminded of that. The only reason that we can own firearms is because the government gives us permission. When I talk to my friends with the Canadian Wildlife Federation on those kinds of things, they say that we need to help Canadians understand that. We do not have a right to own firearms. If we do not get licensed, we are criminals. They resent that, but they will accept the fact that we need to have a licensing regime in place.

Another concern is that I am wondering why those Liberals who have firearms owners in their ridings do not seem to be willing to listen to them. I want to point out that at the committee, the leader of the opposition in the Yukon legislature was not allowed to speak. I am told that there was not a single northern Canadian who was able to testify on how the bill would impact their way of life. I want to read a little from his briefing, which said, "unlike the provinces, Yukon only has one Member of Parliament. This leads to situations where the input of Northerners is often an afterthought and not taken into account. This is the case with this piece of firearms legislation."

I can tell members that there are others. I have another notice on this situation from members of the Yukon Fish and Game Association, who are very concerned that they cannot track down their MP and talk to him about this issue. This is a member who has been around on this issue before. He should be standing up for his constituents. Why is it that the Liberals in the rural ridings, the ones whose constituents depend on having access to firearms for much of their livelihood, are not speaking out?

As my colleague mentioned earlier, we heard about a few of the ridings where there was concern about this, but these Liberals need to speak out. We are getting to the end of the proposed legislation, and it is basically the re-establishment of a semi long-gun registry, where every transaction that takes place at a gun store is going to be recorded for 20 years. The firearm, serial number, the name of the person who bought it, along with their PAL number, will be recorded. That certainly has all the makings and all the components of a firearms registry, and we do not hear anything from the other side.

Another concern is why the Liberals always need to manipulate things on this file. I can go on about this for a long time. I found it very interesting that the public safety minister from Regina has appointed a number of people to the firearms advisory committee who are clearly against firearms in any way, shape, or form. It is interesting that one of them was appointed and ended up being in the vice-chair position. She was a lobbyist. She said she would step down from her lobbying activities. The agreement she signed said that she is not to "engage in lobbying activities or work as a registered lobbyist on behalf of an entity making submissions or representations to the Government of Canada on issues relating to the mandate of this committee". However, 10 months after signing that, this person submitted a legislative demand to the Government of Canada under the letterhead of that organization, and with her signature on it.

• (2350)

I would go through it if I had more time, but many of the bill's provisions happen to be exactly as she has laid them out. Is she actually doing the government's bidding, or is the government doing the lobbyists' bidding, who have said they are not going to lobby the government and then turn around and do it?

I can give members another example in which the government has felt some sort of necessity to manipulate every piece of data it can on this issue. That is around the issue of statistics. As Mark Twain said, "Facts are stubborn things, but statistics are pliable." With the Liberal government, that is certainly more true than almost anything else we can say about it.

It was mentioned earlier that 2013 had one of the lowest rates ever for firearms crimes. It is interesting that even CBC recognized that the Liberals are playing games with this situation. It writes, "2013 saw Canada's lowest rate of criminal homicides in 50 years, and the lowest rate of fatal shootings ever recorded by Statistics Canada" and "every year since 1966 has been worse than 2013." The Liberals use a year in which the stats are lower than they have ever been, and then use that to set their base, and compare it to today. Today is still below the 30-year average, but the Liberals' news releases completely mislead Canadians. When the government has to resort to that kind of manipulation and misinformation, we can see that it is not very comfortable with the legislation that it is bringing in.

The article goes on to say that the "homicide rate in 2018 will be similar to or lower than it was...in 2008...or in 1998", and well below 1988 and 1978, and similar to what it was in 1968. We certainly did not get that from the Liberal press release we saw.

There are a number of other important issues we need to touch on. A member across the way was speaking tonight about the Assembly

of First Nations. I wanted to ask him a question. The AFN has said that it was not consulted before Bill C-71 came forward. The AFN also said that the bill violates first nations treaty rights, and that it is going to launch a constitutional challenge. It is interesting to note that we have heard nothing about that, and there has been no response to it from the government. The Liberals claims to want to work with these communities, but when it comes to their legislation, they are very happy to set these communities aside, and ignore what they have to say about it and just go on.

We have heard comment tonight about Bill C-75 and Bill C-71 playing off each other. Bill C-75 has all kinds of penalties that are basically being written off for serious crimes. For things like terrorism, we are reducing the charges. Imagine there being a summary conviction for terrorism activity. The punishment for genocide is being reduced in Bill C-75. The penalties for organized criminal activity, municipal corruption, and so on are being reduced in Bill C-75, and Bill C-71 is making the lives of honest gun owners even more complicated and bureaucratic than ever. Why is the government doing that? Why are the Liberals ganging up on Canadian citizens, while they are happy to leave all of these other gangs to go through life the way they want?

There is another issue around mental health. We heard a member earlier tonight talk about how proud she was of her amendment. I am sure she had good intentions when she put it forward, but we are not just criminalizing activity anymore; we are criminalizing possible intent. She mentioned that CFOs will make the distinctions. How are the CFOs going to decide if someone is suicidal or not? What CFO wants to take on the responsibility for the entire province in trying to find every person with a mental health issue? It was pointed out earlier that there are police and veterans who have PTSD who want some help for their mental health issues. Are they going to come forward? Why would they do that with a bill like this when those kinds of things come into play in their lives and in their careers, and with a tool they use every day in their occupation?

We can be very proud of the record we have. We brought in a number of pieces of legislation, which have been criticized tonight. In terms of youth violence, we brought in the youth justice fund. The guns, gangs, and drugs component of the youth justice fund was launched to focus on the rehabilitation of youth. We created the youth gang prevention fund. We are very proud of that. We supported a national crime prevention strategy, and there is the northern and aboriginal crime prevention fund. We passed bills that dealt with organized crime and the protection of the justice system. We were always trying to protect the victims, while making sure criminals were the ones who paid the price for their crimes.

This bill is a long way from that. Why an entire bill that is supposed to deal with gun violence and gangs does not mention either of those things, and targets normal, law-abiding citizens, I will never understand.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

• (2355)

[English]

HOUSING

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, earlier this year I asked the government to follow through on its promise of housing rights being human rights. Instead, the government has shown time and time again that it does not embrace the rights-based approach. This was clearly demonstrated when the national housing strategy underwhelmed us with its half-measures to addressing the crisis of homelessness in Canada.

In 2016, my colleague from North Island—Powell River presented this legislature with a bill that would have enshrined the right to housing in our bill of rights, "...the right [of an individual] to proper housing, at a reasonable cost and free of unreasonable barriers."

This is what we asked for Canadians and this is what the government refused to promise its citizens.

How can the government promote its plan for a human rights-based approach to housing without declaring housing to be a human right? The national housing strategy discussion paper states that "there is no universal definition of what a human rights-based approach to housing means". This is government-speak for not wanting to do the hard work to build a consensus around a definition in Canadian human rights law. Consultation is only the first step. A government that came to power with the mantra of hope and hard work should not be shying away from that hard work, but instead leading the way.

Every year, there are 235,000 people experiencing some form of homelessness in Canada and almost three million Canadians spend more than 30% of their income on housing. In the face of these shocking numbers, the stated goal of the government to reduce chronic users of shelters by 50% is extremely disappointing and hardly the goal of a government that has any intention of enshrining a human rights approach.

In fact, many provinces and municipalities have more ambitious goals and so this goal for the national housing strategy is underwhelming and will leave far too many Canadians homeless.

Last month, Canada underwent its third cycle of the universal periodic review at the UN Human Rights Council, and member countries expressed concerns that a nation such as Canada, one with such an advanced level of development, has rates of poverty and homelessness that are far above expected totals.

One peer reviewer from Portugal recommended that the legislation implementing the national housing strategy fully recognize the right to housing and provide for effective remedies for violations of that right.

The government has until September to decide which recommendations it will accept and which it will reject. The world is watching

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and waiting to see how Canada will respond to these recommendations.

The recent report by the advisory committee on homelessness convened by the government also recommends a more ambitious goal for ending homelessness. The UN special rapporteur on the right to housing is also disappointed by the government's low targets pertaining to ending homelessness, as am I. It shows a lack of ambition and a lack of urgency when we only aim to reduce homelessness by 50% over 10 years. We can and must do so much better.

The 2018 budget stated: "housing in shelters doesn't just provide a safe place to sleep, it saves lives." This is true, but if we couple this statement with the national housing strategy goal of a 50% reduction in chronic shelter users, we see a government emphasis on sheltering those who are homeless, not on permanent housing and not on stepping away from prevention and addressing root causes.

A truly rights-based approach policy would focus on ending homelessness, not managing it, and not dealing with some people who are homeless, but all Canadians who are homeless. Canadians deserve the right to security, affordability, good health, and safety in the form of adequate housing. Will the government reconsider its opposition to enshrining the right to housing in legislation?

• (2400)

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member opposite for her sustained focus on housing and on tackling homelessness. It is a shared set of values in terms of the goals we are pursuing as a government.

I want to correct the record, though. When we released the national housing strategy, the UN rapporteur on housing made the following statement, which she issued to the world:

This is an important step that is in keeping with Canada's commitment to the right to housing contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the commitment Canada made in 1975 when it ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The rapporteur also said:

I am glad to see that the Government has now made a significant shift in its approach. It is finally moving toward a more inclusive understanding of human rights, recognizing all people as rights holders, including those who live in inadequate housing and those who are homeless.

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The national housing strategy and our rights-based approach to housing stands distinct from the NDP position in two very important ways. The NDP position, which is simply to have a right to housing, does not necessarily provide a way to deliver the housing that is a right for a person. Declaring it a right will get people, perhaps, into a courthouse, but it will not get them into homes. It may introduce them to lawyers, but they need landlords. While it creates sort of a hope that they can prosecute their way into housing, the reality is that the UN convention talks about having a system of housing that people have a right to access. We have to do two things: create that rights-based approach, and create that system.

The national housing strategy is a \$40-billion investment over the next 10 years that addresses the full continuum of housing needs. The member opposite says that we are not being ambitious enough in reducing chronic homelessness by only setting a target of a minimum of 50%. She is correct. Other jurisdictions, Victoria for example, with our \$30-million investment, paired with the city's investment and the province's investment, will end homelessness within two years and be at effective zero.

We think there is much progress to be made, but we also know and understand that hidden homelessness is not documented properly in this country. Better data is needed. While we step in with a robust \$40-billion program, and we house hundreds of thousands of Canadians across this country, lifting many out of poverty in the process, the reality is that new people will stream into the system, and we have to account for that in the way we make projections. We are doing that.

I want to contrast our \$40-billion investment, which is being spent this year, right now. I was in British Columbia just a weekend ago, in Nanaimo, opening a housing project. We are opening them in Victoria. We are opening them in Vancouver. We are opening them in Toronto. We are opening them in Nova Scotia. It is an extraordinary renaissance that is happening across the country with the national housing strategy, and it comes as we start spending close to \$4 billion a year on housing. We will do that over the next 10 years, increasing the funding as we grow the system.

I want to tell the House what the NDP position on homelessness was when we walked into the last election. This is not a new crisis, and nobody on this file thinks it just suddenly started in the last year or two. This is a 10-year program for a 20-year catastrophe that was in the making.

The NDP, in its approach, was only going to spend \$10 million a year to solve homelessness. We are spending \$200 million a year on the program that they were only going to spend \$10 million on. That is an inadequate response by any measure. When it came to new, affordable housing construction, for the last three years of the mandate, based on its campaign platform, the NDP was going to spend zero, zero, and zero.

I would like to ask the member opposite, in response, how they would solve the housing crisis by not spending money and underinvesting in the sector. That was the NDP platform. That is what the NDP proposed: no housing system in which to achieve one's rights as a human in this Canadian system.

● (2405)

Ms. Sheri Benson: Mr. Speaker, I do not feel that it is for Canadians or the opposition to pat the government on the back for what I feel are half-measures when it comes to addressing the crisis of homelessness.

A government that is committed to a rights-based approach would not have a goal of a 50% reduction in chronic shelter users. It is my job to ask the government to match the action and investment with the urgency of the problem, which I do not feel it has done. The current goal of the national housing strategy falls well short and does not match the crisis we are facing.

All Canadians have a right to housing, not just a temporary shelter. A home should not be a reward but a fundamental human right. A right to housing is fundamental to the true realization of other human rights, like the security of a person. Canadians have a right to housing, and I would like our laws to express that.

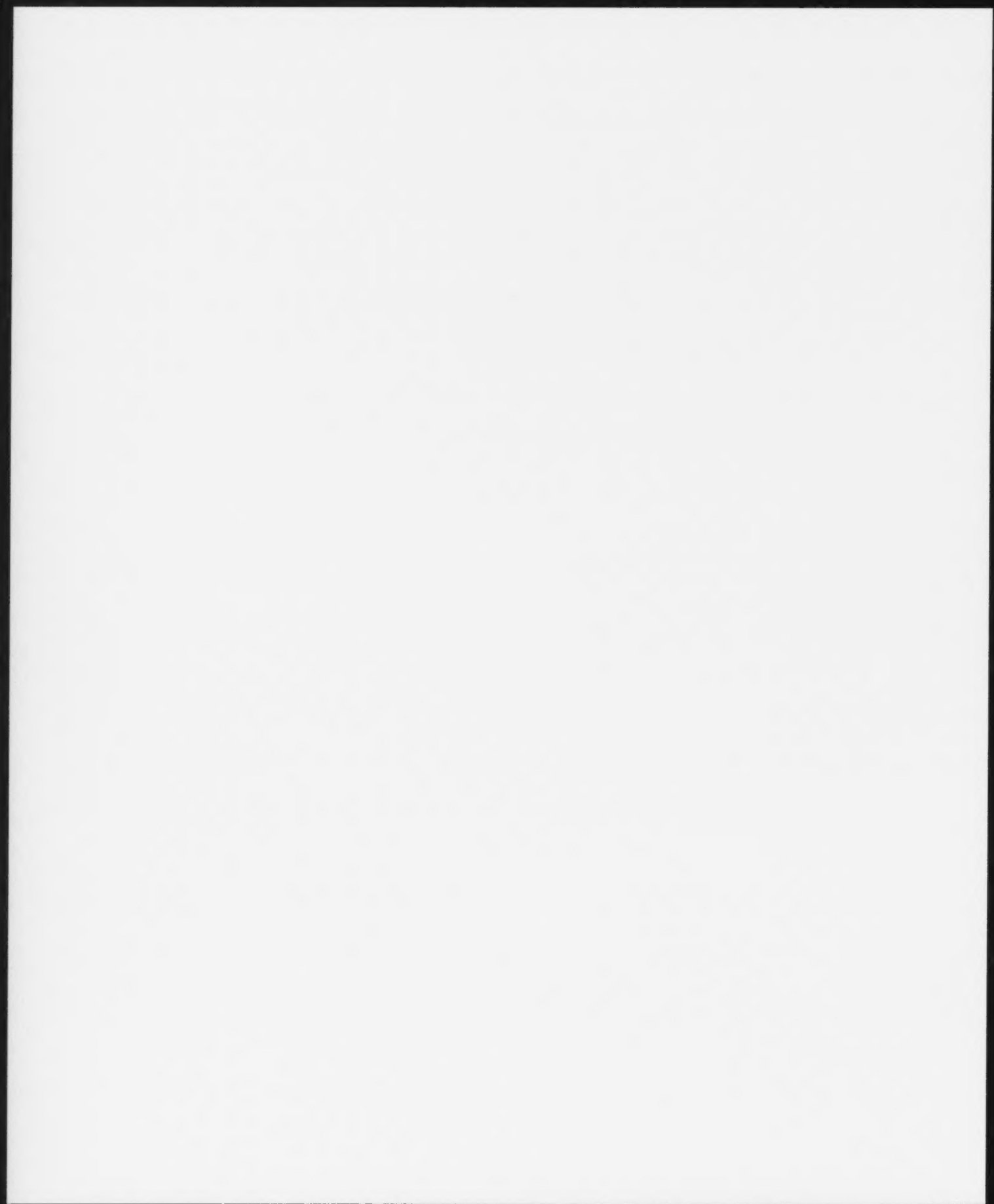
Mr. Adam Vaughan: Mr. Speaker, I will restate this. The party opposite ran on a platform that promised to spend \$10 million extra a year on homelessness, because it thought the crisis was extraordinary. The Liberals spent \$100 million above and beyond what was being spent. In other words, we are spending \$200 million a year, which is 20 times more than the other party, and the other party says that we are being timid and inadequate. The only thing worse than the government not achieving much more success on this would be if the party opposite had been elected and had kept its promise.

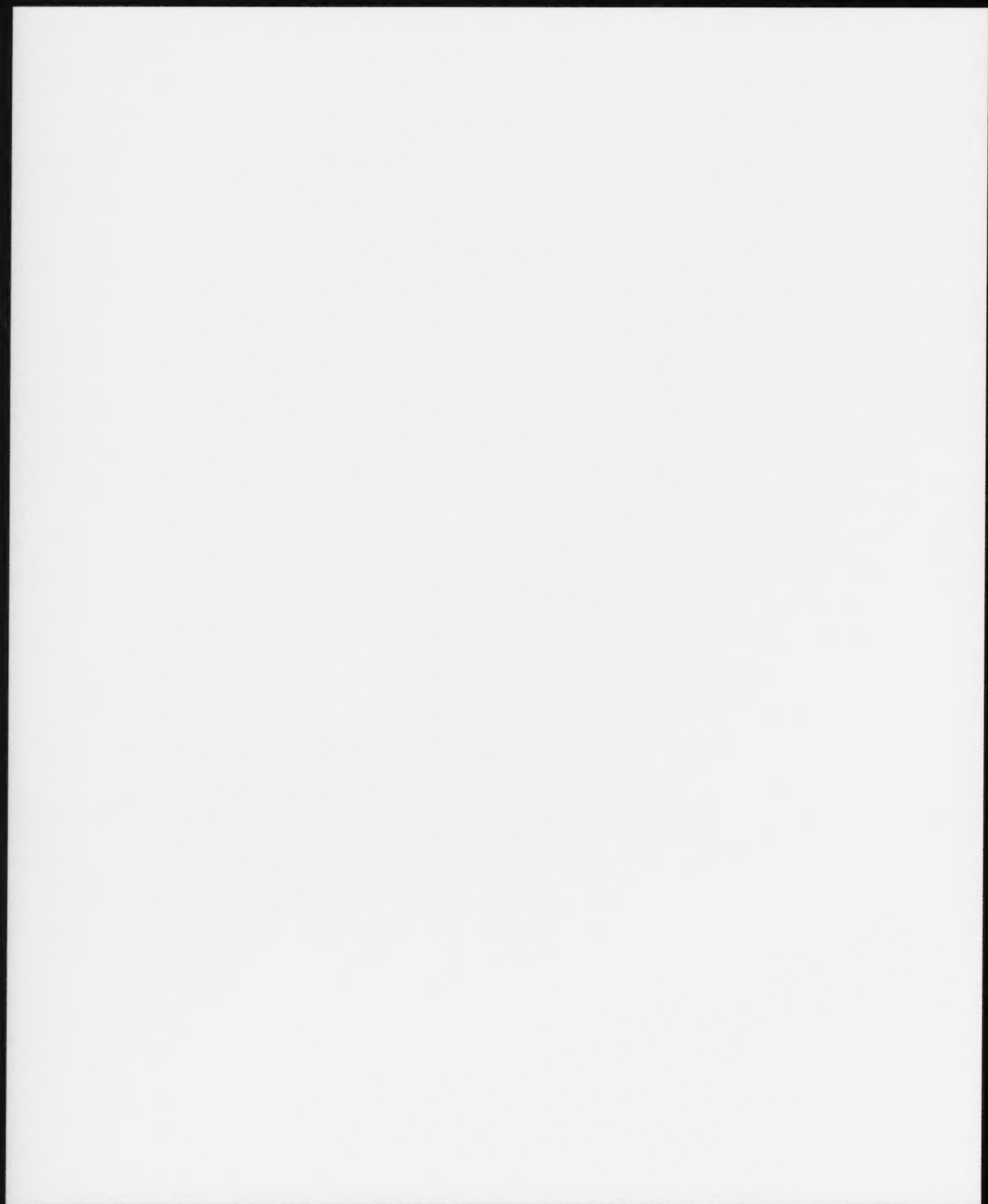
When it comes to the right to housing, it is pointless to have a right to housing if the housing people need is not provided. The party opposite, while it talks about a right to housing, now has the opportunity to support a rights-based approach. It talks about it being a crisis, and it has an opportunity to support our budget that is putting more money into housing than that party ever dreamed of putting in a platform, let alone actually investing in real housing.

If the party opposite is serious about the housing crisis in this country, it should be commending us for taking the bold action we have taken, supporting the legislation we are putting in front of this House—

The Speaker: Order. Pursuant to order made Tuesday, May 29, 2018, the motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until later this day at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 12:09 a.m.)





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